

SCIENTIFIC  
ORDER AND LAW  
AS TRACED BY  
THE METHOD OF CHRIST

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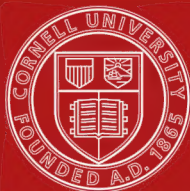
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# SCIENTIFIC ORDER AND LAW

AS TRACED BY

THE METHOD OF CHRIST

AND CONCEIVED TO BE

THE REVEALED WILL OF GOD.

By

JOHN COUTTS,

AUTHOR OF "MAN'S ORGANIC CONSTITUTION," "BRAIN AND INTELLECT," "THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES," "THE TREE OF LIFE," "CHRIST'S KINGDOM," "THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AS REVEALED IN LAW," "THE WITNESS OF SCIENCE TO THE METHOD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM," ETC., ETC.

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## PREFACE.

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The assumption that Law is to be conceived as the Will of God is one that religious people ought to be ready to accept without discussion; but sceptics, whilst agreeing that Law exists and can be proved to be in operation by the reason of man, would probably state that, in their opinion, it is an unproved assertion that law is the Will of God. Those who are religious believe in God, and thus it is easy for them to think of His Will as law; to the agnostic thinker the subject does not appear to be so simple; he might be willing to believe, but he demands intellectual proof, and he is not convinced that the proof he requires is to be found. The two classes of thinkers oppose each other; they cannot be brought to agree; they do not see any middle way of reconciliation; there is a dead-lock; and the result is hopeless antagonism. It is to be assumed that both parties are honest, true thinkers; and, being so, it is not to be expected that the position can be changed, unless new light is thrown upon the problems that they have so fully and carefully studied. So far as can be seen, both parties think that their foundations are secure and their superstructures safe; perhaps the admission of a possible doubt as to the foundations might do good; it is not a good sign when seekers after truth consider themselves to be infallible; or shut out from consideration other lines of thought that may be found useful.

The series of books that suggest reconsideration of the problems raised by the agnostic theory of Evolution may be said to take this fresh departure; and thus foundation and superstructure are studied from a new standpoint. In the "TREE OF LIFE" the Evolution theory is considered from the aspect of science, man, and revelation, and harmony discerned in the thought of THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES and the immanence of God in creation. In "CHRIST'S KINGDOM," the line of thought is that critics in dealing with the Scriptures fail in their efforts; they have no standard for their labours, and thus the result is anarchy; whilst a different line of study, as suggested by the Beatitudes, will indicate the way by which order may be found. In "THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AS REVEALED IN LAW" the thought is developed that throughout the Bible there is an ever-recurring order by which the Spirit reveals Christ as by a system of law, and this is conceived as His eightfold method of thought. In "THE METHOD OF CHRIST" the same

order of thought is applied to physical nature. This is still further extended in "THE WITNESS OF SCIENCE TO THE METHOD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM" when it is seen that this Method of Christ can be traced throughout the whole of Nature; in Man in his complex being; and in the Bible. In this book the same method is applied to the Bible, from the standpoint of history, and it is this deeply interesting theme that receives consideration in the light of the Method of Christ.

It is conceived that the Method of Christ is scientific order; in other words, if it is applied to the Bible by this method of inquiry, there is an ever-recurring response to this method of thought, and the conclusion is that the Bible is a scientific work that can be conceived in this order; even as physical scientists find order in the sciences that they study. When such a conception is reached, the impression is that this scientific order may be thought upon as law and that it is correct so to think upon this order when it is known. The suggestion is to be made here that the terms "order," and "law," although often used as exchangeable and equivalent terms, do not seem to be so in scientific fact; if the knowledge of order and law are perfect the correlations would be equivalent, but the terms seem to express different conceptions. To illustrate this matter, it may be useful to think upon Newton's discovery of the solar spectrum by means of light. The thought that occurred to Newton was that by the inductive method of experiment he had analysed light; and the *order* in which this took place was by the light passing through the prism. Newton did not stop at this stage of inquiry by analysis; he proceeded, by using another prism, to synthesis the refracted rays, and so reverted them back again into light. The order of analysis and the order of synthesis may be conceived as distinct; and the one could take place without the other; but when the analysis and synthesis were complete, then Newton conceived the thought not merely that he had discovered the *order* of analysing and synthesising light; he had received a revelation of *law*. This conception seems to be one that physical scientists keep constantly in view in their experiments; they analyse to find out the order of breaking down to the minutest particles; and they reverse their order to synthesis or build up what they had broken down. Now, it ought to be remembered that the *process* of inquiry is into order; and it is when the order is fully known, but not until then, is the whole process conceived as law. That other great discovery made by Newton of the law of gravitation points in the same direction; there may be many stages of progress in attaining knowledge of order, but law is the link that unites the chain and produces unity.

The suggestion made here is to the effect that "THE WITNESS OF SCIENCE" deals specially with order; it is the Method of Christ that explains and harmonises all order throughout the universe; and it is by

following this order that truth is attainable as intellectual knowledge. The inductive method of inquiry culminates in the method of Christ ; thus the conception arises that the scientific student will find that the order of study, up through Nature to Man, and from Man through the Bible, is a continual recurring order of Christ's Method ; in other words, it is this octave order that reigns and rules throughout the universe, and this is the explanation of the heavenly music throughout all the spheres of the universe. As a conception of universal order, this is a vision that transcends the highest ideal of Science ; to a musician the thought might be that he had entered heaven ; that heaven was music, and that he could hear thousands of octaves of sweet sounds all in perfect harmony. This is the ideal of Creation viewed intellectually as order : it is machinery of the most exquisite perfection ; and it is what gives delight to the intellect of man. Thus far the inductive ideal beloved by Science ; it is a vision of order glorious beyond expression. But there is another order—the deductive and the synthetic, and it is in this realm of thought that higher, wider, and more important problems arise. The thought here is that man permitted the desire to know the order of things to overthrow his judgment ; his craze was the desire to know ; it was through this excessive desire for knowledge the chain of life was snapped asunder ; and then the power to attain true knowledge was lost. Man's ambition was to know, to analyse, to destroy, to take to pieces ; heaven's ideal is life, union, development, and the putting together as a living tree, or temple, of all that exists. To know man reduces all things to chaos and his thoughts remain chaotic ; he cannot give life to what is thus lifeless ; it is here that man stands and looks upon his works, and behold ! they are all dead. It is here that God intervenes to save man from his folly, and His order of procedure is deductive, synthetic, and living. This is the true position of the Bible as the revelation of the way of Redemption. It is from this standpoint that this book should be studied ; not as if in the process of study man had attained to law, but as following the order that leads to law.

It is conceived that science by the inductive method leads onward to that order that is divine and heavenly, to knowledge of truth. What, then, is this power that uses the same method of inquiry deductively and synthetically ? Is it not science also ? and do not scientific men in their studies and experiments so understand this order ? If, by the inductive method, the order is discovered ; and by the deductive order induction is confirmed and considered to be law ; then law is the ascertained results of both, as found in harmony and unity. By induction men discover what is true ; by deduction they prove what is true to be right ; and, in Bible language, this is truth and righteousness. It is worthy of notice that the language of inductive science is permeated with forms taken from the inorganic realm of

thought; whilst deductive science is more at home in the terminology of the biological sciences, and the well known terms used in evolution, as origin, design, type, species, environment. If this line of thought is correct then it would follow that science, as true and right knowledge, is both inductive and deductive; and that both are required to discover, and to declare, what is law. It is here that, in the past, philosophy failed to attain to law; and it is because physical students have been both inductive and deductive in their studies that they have attained to the knowledge of law in physical realms.

If this is clearly perceived then the fitness of the order of study in this book will be understood; it is the necessary complementary study, from the deductive standpoint, to discern order, as found in history and in development. This also ought to be kept in view; the assumption to begin with is that the truth inductively is known; therefore, the object to be attained is to confirm the truth known, to prove it to be right, and thus reach the goal desired, the conception of law. It will be found that the order of study throughout the book takes this course; the introduction is a very brief statement of the knowledge attained. The method in which the Bible is studied, as a history, is deductive; it is man in the light of all that is known, as guided by the Method of Christ seeking after, finding, harmonising, and uniting in the light of Revelation what is seen to be the way to God; the truth of God, in Christ; and the Life of God, by the gracious, patient, glorious work of the Holy Spirit. The summation at the end forms a brief survey of the subject studied; being reflections, suggestions, and thoughts upon matters which require the careful consideration of all who are interested in such studies.

In the light of the Method of Christ it may be assumed that the Bible will be accepted as the Word of God to men for salvation. It does not follow that the interest in the Bible as a record of history, and as a scientific work, will fall off, but rather that it will be increased; only, it may be conceived that the question *How?* will become subsidiary; and that *Who?* and *Why?* will receive greater attention. The region of parable is *How?* It is the inquiry into what the Kingdom of Heaven is like; but *Who?* and *Why?* go much deeper; they seek to transfigure the parable, and by this means to enter into the Kingdom. The Kingdom of Heaven, as a parable, is like unto that mysterious chemical element known as Radium, extracted from pitchblende; it is described as radiant with light, fervent with heat, and curative in action; with the properties that seem to speak of never failing light, undying fire, and the divine mystic power of healing. These powers are what men find spiritually in the Bible; it is the Light of Truth; it is the Life in Christ; it is the power to save, heal, and bless men. It is exceeding precious, for it is, or contains, the very Light, Life and healing Word of God. The



radium in the physical realm cannot explain, or interpret, even as symbol, that eternal Life that is radiant in the Word ; but the Word finds a means of interpretation through man : and it is only when the radiant that is in the divine in man is responsive to the heavenly that the parable of radium can be interpreted. The thought briefly is this : that God, when He is preparing men by His Spirit, to understand His thoughts, then He sends them physical parables to study, to prepare them to comprehend the heavenly : and if men will reflect upon the onward path of scientific discovery, they will perceive that light, the prism, and the spectrum, the law of gravitation, chemistry, physics, and specially electricity and magnetism, are examples of the ways of God with men to lead them onward from the natural to the spiritual.

It is not out of place to suggest the thought that the problems considered require and deserve careful consideration from all who love truth, and seek to do what is right. The fatal choice and set policy of men, to seek to know both good and evil, have borne fatal results in past ages : and it is to be feared that they continue even to this day. Men seem to be in this position, that they do not understand that they lost a great and good inheritance when they forfeited their Edenic innocence ; and they have gained the impression that the Babel Tower, with its confusion, has after all proved to be for the honour and glory of mankind. If this is wrong, and men awaken to realise the great truth that the honour and glory, the praise and blessing is due to God, by Christ, then it will not be very strange if there takes place a revulsion of feeling, a reversion of thought, and a revolution in the actions of men. It is a subtle, fatal blunder to seek to know evil ; the vision now dawning upon men is this very problem of the elimination of evil from mankind ; accompanied by that other transcendent glorious thought that good, all that is true and right, is Law ; and all law natural and spiritual is summed up in, and subservient to, the gracious blessed Will of God.

88, Highbury New Park, London, N.

*24th April 1904.*

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# CONTENTS.

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	<i>Pages</i>
CHAPTER I.	
INTRODUCTION .. .. .	1-44
CHAPTER II.	
CREATION AND THE TEN GENERATIONS .. ..	45-109
CHAPTER III.	
EGYPT, THE NATION AND THE DESERT .. ..	110-140
CHAPTER IV.	
THE MAN, THE LAND, AND THE COMMONWEALTH ..	141-154
CHAPTER V.	
THE KING AND ORDER OF THE KINGDOM .. ..	155-177
CHAPTER VI.	
THE KINGDOM IN THE PROPHETS .. .. .	178-198
CHAPTER VII.	
THE NEW TESTAMENT, GOSPEL OF MATTHEW TO II. CORINTHIANS .. .. .	199-301
CHAPTER VIII.	
THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS TO EPISTLE TO JUDE	302-335
CHAPTER IX.	
THE BOOK OF REVELATION .. .. .	336-363
CHAPTER X.	
THE DIVINE BOOKS — THEIR ANALOGIES AND HARMONIES .. .. .	364-398
CHAPTER XI.	
SUMMATION .. .. .	399-520

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

*"To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." . . . "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."—ISAIAH chap. xl., 25, 28, 29.*

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."—LUKE iv., 18, 19.*

*"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you."—JOHN xvi., 13, 14.*

These texts are the root thoughts of transcendent themes; they speak of the Incomparable that is in God; of the Divine Method that is revealed in Christ; and of the gracious, patient Divine Wisdom that is in the Holy Spirit. These are the problems around which the thoughts of men are moving at the present time; and experience, empiricism, theology, philosophy, and science are all being made tributary to the great work of discovering the Method of Christ. It may be conceived as true that, as the result of scientific inquiry, there has come about,

with silent persistent force, the greatest revolution in human thought ever known? Can it be said that science has analysed its own power as the instrument of inquiry? Analysis by the method of induction is certainly a powerful means of reaching even to the very depths of related thoughts; but is this power infallible? Is it unlimited? Is it an end, or only the means to be used by men to reach the end, which extends far beyond the realm of science? When by means of the keenest intellects all the physical sciences have been reduced to their final correlations of thought, in scientific order, is it to be conceived that man's intellectual power, as operative upon nature, will then find no further work to do in the study of the physical universe? When the psychological sciences have been fully mastered, will the mysteries of spirit, mind and memory be then fully known, and will the soaring wings of the intellect find no atmosphere within which they will find reaction, and means of gaining strength? When men think that they know all truth attainable by science, will they be satisfied, content, happy? And would such a consummation of the hopes of past ages be a point where men might rest, having at last found salvation and peace in the blessed state of knowing all truth through the soul-satisfying fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? When the intellect of man has analysed all relations of thoughts, and found their harmonies; and been led to see that order in the universe means spiritual law; will the discovery be recognised that the intellect is only the instrument of discovering order; and that it is a creature power severely limited for this very purpose? What will the intellect do when its aspirations fail, and the discovery is made that it is not supreme in power, and regal in authority, but only a servant meant for the honourable service of setting in order the house within which the man and the son of God should dwell in harmony with the Will of God as this is found in the Divine laws of the universe? The intellect, by empiricism and science, has in the past aspired to the supreme sovereignty over man and nature; but the issue, it would appear, has been what many scientific men did not foresee; for the intellect has discovered that it has limitations; and thus men may expect better service from this servant, in its legitimate position, than when, in its days of usurpation, it knew neither its own limitations nor the service for which it had been ordained by the Supreme Law-giver and Lord of all creatures.

These thoughts and questions point both backward and forward ; they suggest that before the problem of BEING the intellect and science must remain dumb, because the intellect is not endowed with power to grasp, or analyse, that ultimate Reality which exists beyond all relations. When order and law are known and understood, then the intellect finds rest in harmonious thoughts that are conceived as order and law ; and law is the Divine Will which when known ought to be obeyed. Such truths as these have been realised by experience and empiricism in the past ; they have been seen to be true and right ; and now science is compelled to bow her head and confess that the issue lies in this direction. Being is beyond the comprehension of man ; becoming, order, and knowing relations lie within the range of his intellectual powers ; and, with law, clearly conceived, there must follow subjection, reverence, authority, and duty. It is this crucial stage of thought that men have now entered upon ; and thus it may be said that the glamour which surrounded the desire to know is passing away, and the minds of men are being sobered down to the inquiry as to the doings of men in the past, to law, duty, responsibility, and to how men have lived and acted in the sight of God in the period conceived as history.

BEING, the intellect cannot understand, and law, as a spiritual concept, transcends the intellect. It is true that the relations of thought, by science, is conceived as law, but beyond the relations and the order, there lies the Divine Will ; thus Being, and Law as Will are equally mysterious, and it would seem that man cannot fathom these mysteries. To know BEING, and the WILL that is Law, is not given to man to understand ; even the archangels in glory may not aspire to such knowledge ; they also are conceived to be the creatures of God limited by law ; and if it is meet that the angels should veil their faces in the presence of God, then surely fallen sinful man is unworthy to lift his head in the Divine Presence. It is this extraordinary vision that is dawning upon men by the light of science ; the glory of knowing has come upon them in a way they could not have suspected ; the King of Truth and Glory is in the midst ; and the light is so dazzling, bewildering, glorious, that men do not know what to think or say about it. Science, by the intellect, has faced many problems ; and, in the light of the truth in Christ there have been many interesting discoveries ; nature and man have radiated

forth strange revelations ; and the Divine Word has also become radiant as with a new glory, telling men that all truth is a revelation from God ; and that there is no being, truth, or life, in the universe except that which is derived from God through Christ. Would it seem so very strange to men if the new service, to which a penitent science might be called in the future, is the conflicting and very difficult problem of history ? There would be a fitness in the penitence, the sorrow and the travail of the hearts of men, in thus thinking upon the past. Here science would deal with knowledge of a personal kind for the story would be that of mankind under the thralldom of the intellect, with the serpent as counsellor and friend, with the thirsting desire to know good and evil, the ambition to be great and powerful, to have the eyes open and the desires satisfied. The way must be the sorrowful way ; the shadow of the Cross is upon it ; there are bloody foot-prints to be traced everywhere, and man cannot reverse what has been done. It is what men have done that is the theme of history ; and every man, woman and child will find a place somewhere, a stage of development, in the terrible story of the past, and of the present. A true science of history must be a serious study ; and were it not that grace, light, life, truth, and love from heaven have been revealed by the way, even a penitent science dare not face the past, because it has to be remembered that science must only seek after, find, and co-relate, what is true. The Truth will throw light upon the pathway of science ; He passed through the fiery ordeal, and men knew not, could not see or understand what was meant by His journey. Now it may be that they will retrace their steps in His company, for wherever the light of truth is, there is Christ, and there also is the patient, gracious Spirit of Truth, revealing Christ as the Way to the Father.

The secular history of the world requires many students in this pathway of science, and such a history could not be limited to the record of events in the brief period of the story of mankind. In a true sense all the sciences are history, because they are the conceived records of the becoming of all that is physical, psychical, moral, and spiritual. It has been conceived that the sciences of Astronomy, Geology, Biology, and Psychology, etc., respond in their order to what has been termed the " Method of Christ," and that they do in a wonderful manner correspond or synchronise with the Beatitudes uttered by Christ. There is in them an ever-



recurring rhythm of movement, of development, like that which is found in the Solar Spectrum, or in octaves of music ; and this harmony of thought can be traced throughout all the Sciences, physical, psychical, moral, and also spiritual in the Bible as the Word of God. To this aspect of history there ought not to be any objection raised by thoughtful men ; the series of the becoming of nature being named creation, manifestation, history, or revelation. The lower, the natural, is the foundation upon which the spiritual is built up ; and only now has the stage of thought been reached where the lower has been seen, as transfigured into law, from the physical into the spiritual. In the realm of pure science there is no physical ; the conception now is that of order and law ; and law is spiritual, transfigured concepts, no longer subject to the senses or experience. For convenience, as matter of order, all the lower sciences may be summed up in the term, Natural sciences ; but when the student rises above these to the history of mankind, and to the Bible as the revealed Word of God, then the history is not in the same sense natural ; it is of a special spiritual kind ; and the whole history of mankind is included in this conception. It is not supposed that the natural reveals or explains Christ, but that Christ reveals and explains nature, and that only in the light of His method of thought can man really attain to true scientific knowledge. The statement here is to the effect, that even as men see truly by the light of the sun in the early dawn before the sun becomes visible, so all true science is seeing in the light of Christ, even though scientists do not know that they have been working in the light of Christ ; this gives light to all men, in varied degrees, in all parts of the earth. There ought not to be any difficulty in grasping this thought that the natural sciences do not come to men as special revelations ; man is so constituted that his nature is in harmony with, responds to, and corresponds with, all that is found in nature ; he is endowed with intellectual power for the purpose of finding out such correspondencies ; and his moral nature, when normal and duly trained in righteous law, would harmonise with that great law of moral love which is the crown and glory of man. It is conceivable that such a creature of God intellectual and moral could exist ; and, following this conception, it may be assumed that such a man would develop in a natural way by gaining knowledge in harmony with a life conformable to moral law. That this is not man's position is plainly seen ;

he is out of harmony with nature ; there is conflict in his own soul ; the intellect over-rides the moral nature ; and thus to man's present state there is applied such terms as sin, evil, darkness, disease, and death. Man ought not to sin against law, God ; he ought to be and do good ; he ought to walk in the light of truth without stumbling ; he ought to be at ease and happy ; he ought to live and not die, physically and spiritually. His nature, as law, order, points out these facts ; and the conclusion reached is that in some way or other man sinned, left his home, turned away from his Father, got lost in the darkness of the great desert, and that the Christ alone as Shepherd, Saviour, Friend, and Brother, could bring man back again to his home and to his heavenly Father.

Here it is necessary to lay strong emphasis upon the thought that man, even as sinful, is far above the lower creatures ; although it is to be conceived that he is lower than the angels in glory. Even as an intellectual being he is spiritual, with endowments and powers which contain within them possibilities of the highest spiritual order. There is truth in the conception that the sinful Adam was a moral ruin, and spiritually dead to God ; but it is also true that ere the darkness closed in upon the unhappy man a new day dawned, the day of grace had come, and a new seed was planted in the earth, which in its nature transcended in its inherent virtue all the powers with which man was formerly endowed. It is the history of this Seed of Grace that is the Revelation in the Bible, and it is the history of this seed among men and nations that is true history. If men will in their perversity search the Bible to learn astronomy, geology, biology, or psychology in their initiatory stages, it is not strange if they return disappointed, having failed to find such sciences in a work of God, that is meant to teach the science of Grace, of salvation from sin, and redemption from the power of evil. Is it out of place to express the thought that men do not think or act wisely, when they seem to forget the real purpose of this great work of God, and seek to find in its pages, chronology, history, law, literature, methods of government, and forms of worship ? It is quite true that such subjects are dealt with in the sacred pages of the Bible ; but all these are below the spiritual plane of the science in the Bible ; they are as the stepping stones upon which the feet of men may rest as they cross the stream of life. They are as symbol foundation stones, successive tiers of stones in the spiritual Temple of God as it is being raised

above the earth ; they are organic forms within which there is life ; but neither stones nor organic forms are of the essence of the Science of the Book of the Realm of Grace. Rather they are the things about which men cannot agree, mere intellectual concepts which were found necessary for the reconstruction of manhood, and for the development of man from the likeness of Adam to the image and likeness of the Son of God. It is not to be taken for granted that although the first man was formed in the Divine likeness, in his original state, that he remained in that condition, for it is expressly recorded that the son of Adam was born in the likeness of his father, the earthly man. What men see in Adam is the moral ruin with the perverted intellect ; his symbol is not the Divine but the serpent ; and it is from this degraded low condition, as a creature of God, that he, by the grace of God, is going to be restored to the Divine favour, and raised up to sit in glory among the sons of God. It is humbling to man, and a doctrine not easily received, to be thus classed with the most subtle of the creatures of God ; but, it is very like the naturalistic conception favoured by many who believe in evolution, that man has arisen by a natural process from the lower creatures. The two concepts meet in a remarkable manner at this junction where man is found as without God and without hope in the world ; but it would seem as if the evolutionist in his study of nature and man was utterly unable to find any clue to explain the difference betwixt the lower creatures, and man with intellect and a moral nature, in God likeness. Two chapters in the history of man have not been found by naturalistic thinkers : there is a day of light, life, and glory, a golden time, and there is the night of sorrow, sin, expulsion from Eden, and home ; followed by the dreary desert and wilderness, where men have sojourned on their way to a better land. It may seem foolish to lay so much stress upon this conception of man, as fallen and sinful, as perverted from truth and believing lies, as walking in the darkness and guided by a pillar of fire ; as being only greater than the lower creatures because possessing a spiritual nature capable of knowing truth and doing right. These constitute possible manhood ; upon these manhood can be built up ; but, let the thought be remembered, and studied, that just as man was not instrumental in the becoming, and in the manifestation of his own physical body and psychic soul, so he has not been the cause of his own spiritual development, his change into moral manhood, and his transfiguration into the likeness of Christ,

the Son of God ; but, to his shame it must be said, he has failed to perceive the Christ in history ; and he has time after time, and age after age, grieved the Holy Spirit and thwarted His work of redemption. These are grave charges to bring against mankind ; they do not fit into the temper of the times that seeks to glorify man ; but science has to study the record of history ; the trial is yet to come, the verdict will be given in the light of truth, and the judgment will be pronounced in due time.

It has been suggested that the physical and psychical sciences are the stepping stones by which scientists rise up from unconscious history to the history of man, as his history is now studied in revelation, tradition, myth, pre-historic records of various kinds hieroglyphics, signs in stone and clay, papyrus, manuscripts, and books. In truth the dead past is being brought back to life again ; what was buried in the darkness, and forgotten by men is coming to the light ; the great sea is throwing upon the land its hidden treasures ; and, if men could only see truly, they would know that the books are being opened and studied, and that the judgment will be according to truth and righteousness. When the problem of history is viewed from such a standpoint as this, it can be seen that the conceptions and writings of historians must not be accepted as infallible truth ; critics and their judgments may be vain, because they have no standard of judgment. What they write is useful ; they record events in the way they consider most suitable to convey information, and, it may be granted that their studies are in many instances inductive in their order, and thus in a sense scientific. But is it not with the science of history as with all other sciences ? The inductive method of inquiry can only tend to make known when events took place, how they occurred, and who the actors were. Two or more historians record the same events ; they agree as to the facts, and such agreement would be conceived as scientific truth or authenticated history. This might be conceived as the baldest form of scientific history ; but this would never satisfy the student of humanity ; what he wishes to know about is the characters and the motives of the actors, the causes, and the consequences of the events recorded. History cannot be limited by knowing relations only ; motives are inquired into, as to the wisdom or folly of the men, their moral purposes, and the good or evil, the happiness, the pain, sorrow, and trouble, which followed as results. In other words, men seek in a historian a man with the keenest scientific

intellect ; but along with the gift of knowledge he is expected to be a moral man, and if he fails to rise to this altitude of his work he is not a historian, but merely a recorder of events. The scientific man may try to satisfy himself and others by knowing about how things have occurred ; the moral man will add to his work the far higher and more valuable information as to causes, motives, and consequences ; the religious man will try to find out in what way the Divine and the human meet in historic events, and the philosophic thinker will not rest satisfied until science, morals, and religion are found to agree in a harmony and unity, which the scientific thinker may be inclined to say has nothing to do with science. It seems to be through this kind of self-assertion that the agnostic scientist has fallen into disrepute among his brethren : he will assert that knowledge of a certain kind is all that man requires, and that different forms of knowledge are not to be received as knowledge, but as superstitions ; the fact being that man requires, asks for, and cannot be satisfied without, this unity and harmony of all these means by which knowledge can be gained.

As it is with man as individual, so it is with the race, only the platform is very broad, the time is very long, and thus the infancy, childhood, adult life, manhood, scientific and moral development of the race is very complex and difficult to comprehend. It is not historians only that teach history ; parents teach their children in many ways ; teachers in schools convey to their scholars the results of history as well as historic facts ; the artist paints a picture and it reflects history ; the novelist writes a story and his work may be history ; the moral teacher seeks to convey to students the causes and effects of history ; and the teacher of religion may be said to concentrate into his duties, as a minister of the Gospel, the all important events in history. If, for example, a child sees a picture of Father Time with sand-glass and scythe, is he not taught that time is like an old man ; that time is measured as by grains of sand ; that the scythe passes over all that lives, and that the end of the visible world is death. If a child is told the story of Uranus and Gæa ; of Kronos swallowing his family of children, with a stone in place of the new born Zeus, will not the narrator of the myth proceed to explain that this is not a real story about an ogre, but a kind of allegory which speaks about heaven and earth ; about time and its offspring, with the strange result that though time will

swallow up all that lives, yet the end will be that time, past and present, though unseen, will come to life again, and that the great Son of Time will take the place of Kronos when the present age of time has passed away. Again, is it not fitting to place before a youth the picture of the Recording Angel, the silent watcher and his work, and to point out the fact that such an angel can be seen in Nature and found in every man. Following such a picture, would it be not fitting to speak of the man who keeps the books in which the Recording Angel has written what he has seen, and to explain that the meaning is not difficult to understand, because it is a picture of the records in the rocks, of living creatures that have long passed away, of hieroglyphics and cuneiform signs representing dead languages, of letters and books within which valuable information is stored, and last, but not least, the important fact that mind and memory in man is like, very like, all that can be found in the rocks and history. To the careless young man would it be out of place to set before him a picture of Moses, the great leader, teacher, and lawgiver of Israel in Egypt, at Horeb, and in the desert? Could a nobler picture of a great man be photographed upon the soul of man as struggling to know the mysteries of life, and how man ought to live as faithful to God and as useful in the service of man? Are there not living pictures for men in Alfred the Great, as student and king, in Joshua or Samuel, Joseph or Daniel? Do they not reflect what man ought to be, by the study of the Word of God; and what they ought to do, as the servants of God? Is it necessary to teach men the results that follow sin and wrong doing? Let the picture be the pilgrim and his burden, and that terrible dream of the judgment day. Is it a deliverer from the power of sin that is required? Let the picture be Moses, Egypt and the great deliverance. Is it the deliverance from the consequences of sin? Then how many pictures may be found in the Life of Jesus and His blessed works of healing? Is the trouble that of the soul in the depths; the righteous Judge and outraged law? Then where will men find rest, peace, forgiveness and the joy of heaven, but in gazing at the Cross of Christ, the darkness, the agony, and the bitter cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me"? This, indeed, is the sacrifice of Divine Love; here it is seen that the wickedness of men is unspeakable; and the pity, mercy, grace, and love of God immeasurable. Heaven and hell wrestle in the darkness,



and that Man so wronged by men becomes the Conqueror of evil by Divine patient suffering, by self-sacrificing love. This is the awful climax of sin, of the powers of evil ; and it is also here that there flashes before men the Divine thought that God is Love. Beyond these visions, seen and heard by men, where will they find more valuable visible signs, or outward forms ? If the Cross, the sacrifice of Christ, the mercy and love of God thus manifested is not sufficient to turn men from their sinful ways to seek the mercy and grace of God, then by what means will they be brought to repentance, to conversion, to the regenerate state, to the new spiritual life, and to the Father's Home ? The Vision was once visible, but the truth, the facts, the history, is of the deepest spiritual kind. He is no longer like the Man Jesus, He is the Christ, the Son of God ; and His Spirit is the minister of mercy and grace as by fire and a rushing mighty wind. The fire and wind move men Christward and Godward. The Christ, by His Spirit, is incarnate in mankind ; men perceive the vision and respond to it, and thus the Kingdom of Christ is come with power ; He lives and reigns in the souls of men, and the time must come when all the kingdoms of men will be overthrown and His Kingdom will be supreme on the earth. It may well be that critical historians would think and say that in such pictures, myths, historic men, great events, spiritual forces and movements there is not to be found a science of history ; and yet, it is possible that in such conceptions there may be found the germs of all history as related to one Man and to the race of mankind. The problem to be solved is not that of the reasoning historian, as he tabulates all the facts of history ; rather it is to find adequate and harmonious answers to the ever recurring questions which men will put to creation and to their experiences, as to the past, present, and future, as to the Whence ? When ? Why ? What ? How ? By Who or Whom ? Whereunto ? And Whether ? all things and movements arise, develop, tend, and issue ? A scientific agnostic student of history might seek to know and try to be satisfied with the order and laws of the great river of onward development ; but the tiny atom, man, the believer in God, environed by this great stream of time, and all it contains, will not rest satisfied by such knowledge ; he is so constituted as to be able to perceive, receive, treasure up within his own soul all the revelations of God ; and thus the great mystery of man's being is to be found in this startling

fact ; he must conceive God in some way as a spiritual concept ; and this spiritual knowledge is to be realised in the true spirit of obedience, and in conformity to the Will of God.

If this is really the explanation of man's restless state during past ages, and it is to be assumed as true, that this is what man has been pursuing, yet ignorant as to his own needs and the way by which they can be satisfied ; then it becomes clear that experience, empiricism, philosophy, science and revelation have thus far failed to bring him to the goal of his desires. He is still wandering in the great Desert ; he is unable to disentangle himself from the gloomy wood and thick scrub by which he is surrounded ; he is in the maze and cannot find the way out ; the dragon of evil is on his track, and what is required is a safe and true guide ; in fact, one who knows all about desert, wood and maze, to show him the way to safety and to the Father.

If men have got thus far, in what is a real spiritual revelation, as to be convinced that, so far as men are concerned, the wisest and the best of men have not been reliable guides, then it is not unreasonable to expect that they will be prepared to consider whether this extremity is not a fitting opportunity for God to reveal Himself, and His ways, in a special manner, such as the age requires and desires. It is not to be expected that such a revelation will be something altogether new, but rather that there may come a new conception of development arising out of the past ; in fact, that from seed, stem, leaf, branch, and flower, there may be made manifest the rich harvest in the manifestation of perfect seeds, a thousand-fold increased, to the praise and glory of His Name. This is the wonder, the mystery of creation and of history ; they are not dead things, they live, develop, and come to fruition. The cycle may be that of the year, or of thousands of years, but the end is ever the same, the living cycles of things physical, psychical, and spiritual are ever taking diversified forms, and thus the vision for which men are waiting will not only transfigure, it will in a most marvellous way transcend the far-seeing visions of the past.

It is to be conceived, as a great truth, that the law of development, so far as men can understand it, may be reasoned out in scientific order from the beginning in the physical forces, energy and matter, through physical life, by psychology, up to the point where they are found gazing heavenward, with a new light upon their faces, wondering in what way God will be pleased to speak ;

and in what way He will grant to men the knowledge of His will and works. It is not necessary to emphasize the fact that the works of men end in the babel of confusion ; and, so far as can be seen, men had failed to see that they had not been looking in the direction from whence the light of God's truth would come. As related to mankind the great stages of development can be traced ; and it becomes an interesting study to enquire, Why it is that men have failed to understand the unique method by which His works have been wrought throughout the ages ? Men have been from the beginning of their existence familiar with the facts that outside personality there exists a natural world ; and, that by means of the special senses, living organs in the body, they have been able to see, hear, taste and smell, what exists in that realm which is not a portion of their own physical organism. That intimate relations and correspondencies existed could not be doubted, because the spirit, the knowing power in men, perceived them, and thus to doubt the evidence of the senses would appear to be unreasonable. The spirit perceives, and thus sense images become ideas ; these are stored up as images and ideas in the mind or memory ; and thus within the soul of man there is built up a psychic world of thoughts, ideas, images, related thoughts and correlated thoughts and actions, and this is conceived as the psychic world of experience, ripening into an empiricism, in the light of which men have lived and walked for ages. It is well known that the empiricism which would satisfy, not the ignorant only, but shrewd, thoughtful, practical men, did not satisfy those keener intellects which would reason out, in the best way they could, their conceptions of creation, providence, and redemption from evil. They were not satisfied with what was generally accepted as true and right by the masses of men ; there appeared to them to be a more spiritual, or esoteric wisdom, which if they could attain, would prove to be true science, and by this attainment they would become the sages, the wise men, the enlightened ones, the possessors of Divine wisdom. In this list may be classed all who have been named philosophers ; they have been searchers after truth, scholars ; but the history of philosophy proves that there has not been any unity of thought, or harmony of systems of wisdom, and thus the manifold philosophies that exist do not bring men into the light of radiant Divine Truth. It can be conceived that forms of religion and theology may be summed up in a similar way ; it is to be feared

that theologies are, in a sense, philosophies ; the philosopher, or theologian, gains as much knowledge as he can attain, and then out of the mass gathered together there is the earnest attempt made to put in deductive, logical order, all the knowledge possessed, as pertaining to the universe, man, the Word, and God. It ought not to be questioned that philosophers and theologians have been learned men ; they have sought for truth ; conceived the truth to the best of their ability, and the results are known ; but philosophies and theologies seem to be intellectual, dead systems of thought, and thus few care to read or study them. With the advent of inductive science came the dawning of a new day ; scientific men said that they would no longer permit deductive systems of thought to rule over them ; they would formulate the sciences by the inductive method, and thus from observed facts, by experience and experiment, wrest from Nature the secrets she possessed, and by this means attain to true wisdom. It can be seen that the results gained by experience, and experiment inductively, have been of greater value than the philosophies made known by deductive reasoning ; but it has not been proved that science has reached, or will ever reach, that goal which is the object ever kept in view by philosopher, theologian, and scientist. The assumption here is that they have all equally failed, and that they have not been able to explain the riddle of the Sphinx, or convey to man the secret method of the Divine operations in Nature, Man, and in the realm of Grace as contained in the Word of God. It is not expected that the man guided by experience in the realm of empiricism will do so ; he makes no serious attempt to gain such an end. The philosopher acknowledges no guide ; he is an eclectic ; the guide he reveres, follows, and obeys is his own reason, and thus the marvellous diversities of systems of philosophy that are known to men. The theologian acknowledges a Divine Guide ; but the deductive synthetic order of reasoning upon the contents of a Book which is a Divine mystery, and developed according to scientific laws which he does not understand, in a measure unfits him for the very task he undertakes ; and thus the strange anomalies of theologians conceiving, describing, and in many ways limiting, God and His works. Can it be said that true science has been more successful in its efforts ? Is it to be conceived that science, by the inductive method, and the agnostic philosophy of the Unknowable, as guide and friend, have achieved more satisfactory

results ? It would seem that the answer must be in the negative ; the inductive method of experiment is only the more keen spiritual action of the intellect, as compared with the duller and less perfect working by ideas and the special senses. In the realm of empiricism, sense images, ideas, thoughts, and related thoughts, find their world of light, warmth, and harmony ; in the realm of science the analysis is keen and cutting, but what is analysed and put in order is a spiritual system of signs, words, and terms of the most complex kind. It would be a mistake to suppose that science cuts itself adrift from empiricism and begins anew to form a creation of thought that has nothing to do with experience ; the fact must be that it is upon empiricism that science builds ; and thus the scientific order is that which develops out of the physical and the psychical, and the result is a spiritual creation in harmony with the physical and psychical. If, then, this spiritual or scientific order of thought is natural, as dealing with concept words and related conditions, as links in the story of development in creation, has there been imparted into it anything that is above the natural, above causes and effects, and the whole train of apparent consequences as they have been conceived by men ? It is quite true that the scientist may say that Science deals with laws, whilst empiricism deals with order, as gained by experience ; but is not this a matter of degree and of difference in the forms of knowledge ; the one being compared to the natural vision, whilst the other is like that of the microscope ; in the one case the basis of knowing is the senses and ideas, in the other it is upon the reasoned concepts attained by empiricism as conveyed in signs, words, and abstract thoughts. It cannot be said that empiricism, or science, by the intellect, reach beyond the natural, thoughts and their relations, an observed order or conceived law. It is understood that the value of empiric knowledge is not to be compared with the knowledge gained by science as to results ; because in the first men may be ignorant and prone to superstition ; whilst by science the vague impressions of secret, subtle powers tend to be dispelled ; the manifold and the indefinite give place in philosophic scientific thought to the conception of one power and process and to definiteness as to the order existing throughout the universe. Whilst all this is to be granted in favour of science, it is necessary to remember that inductive science deals with related thoughts ; it is a question of intellectual comparisons, of like, and of what is unlike ; and

thus it would appear that inductive science alone cannot solve the riddle of the Sphinx, or explain the mystery of the order of creation.

The position, as it is thus conceived, seems to take this form ; the empiricist accepts the evidence of the senses, the experiences of life, and to a large extent that which is said to be a Divine revelation ; and faith, not reason, lies at the root of that which is revealed. In a general way philosophy accepts empiricism, there is special training required to attain to wider realms of knowledge ; the results are diversified in a wonderful manner, but the end is the conception of an absolute, unrelated, unconditioned power, believed to exist, but so far as man can discover not demonstrable by the intellect of man. The conceptions of theologians may appear to be very different ; but when their systems of thought are studied, it is found that the end is much the same ; the God of the Bible, as believed in by faith, is conceived as the Eternal, Unchangeable, Omniscient, etc., dwelling in the light that is inscrutable or the darkness that is impenetrable. With science, as supplemented by the agnostic philosophy, the issue is similar ; in the darkness science seems to reach a rock that hinders progress downwards ; it comes face to face with a wall so high that it cannot be surmounted ; it is involved in a network of causes and effects which move in cycles and epicycles, but whether there is beginning or end, so far as scientific relations are concerned, it is not possible to reach any definite conclusion. It cannot be said with truth that science has shed any light upon the problems of being, ultimates, related ultimates, and similar questions ; it has simply given up the struggle by the confession of agnosticism, as to all metaphysical problems ; and it is the naturalistic philosophy of modern times that attempts to close up the gulf by a confessed belief in darkness, by naming the Ultimate of all thought and reasoning, the Unknowable. What strikes a thoughtful student when considering these complex matters is that there appears to be a likeness in the method of study in all these classes of thinkers. At bottom they are all empirics ; the psychic conditions are similar ; the intellectual operations upon the subjects studied are ego-centric or self-developed ; where there is Divine light it is subsidiary, and the Divine may be traced by the golden lines of light that are inwoven into their systems of thought. It is important to get a clear conception of the thoughts involved in this attempt to



unify the attitude of the minds of men in their studies : this is why the diversity is so great ; all these thinkers, of all classes, have considered themselves to be scientific thinkers ; and it is difficult to see in what way their claims can be refuted if, as must be taken for granted, they have all been seekers after truth, and desirous of expressing their thoughts in reasoned relations, as empiric order, philosophic system, theological dogma, or scientific law. The peculiarity of the mistake, if mistake there be, lies here ; all these students have been inquirers, they have not attained to perfect science ; they are toilers in the night and in the dawn, all climbing the steep hill that leads to science ; when the mountain top shall be reached and their faces are turned round to the eastward, then it will be to see the rising Sun of Righteousness, Truth as Divine, as conceived in Christ and in the revelation of His method of thought. In other words, all the thoughts of all thinkers, in all the ages, have come from the same source, for Christ is the Light that gives light to all men ; the strange conception is found here ; these millions of thinkers have received the light of truth at differing angles ; the light of truth has been broken up from the Divine unity ; and the result has been that division of rays of light which radiate in a semi-circle from one central point. It will be seen that this radiation is of a peculiar kind ; the individuality of the light is not lost, but according to the angle of the motion received as the progression takes place, it is outward into the darkness of space and time, where the motion of thought may seem to be for ever lost. Is not this a true conception of the manifold and most wonderful thoughts and works of men ? They are all divergent and not convergent ; they are away from Christ, the Light of the World ; and it is not within the powers of men, of the sons of Adam, to reverse this motion which is toward the darkness and the silent night. It will be seen that the figure used to express these thoughts, this parable of light and darkness, is that of light and the solar spectrum. The physical experiment of Sir Isaac Newton has been followed thus far in the analysis of truth as light, and the thoughts of men as the divergent rays as they pass through the prism ; it is now expedient to follow him in the order of his discovery, and inquire by what means these divergent lines of truth may be met, caught, changed as to their direction of motion, and the great analysis of the thoughts of men synthesised and converged into the pure light of Divine truth ? It is useless to take Moses,

John, Paul, Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Plato, Hegel, or Spencer, and put them up and expect that the divergent rays in them, when reversed, and converged to a point, would flash forth into the pure white light of truth; they are only rays, broken beams of Divine light, and thus it could only be expected that the re-refraction would not change the coloured rays into pure light. The strange, unique fact which men will be compelled to study is, that when Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Man, is placed as prism to prism, He is in the most wonderful way found to be the complement of all men, of the rays of every colour, of darkness, of heat and actinic power; they converge in Him, and the result is the Light of Truth. The parable is worthy of careful consideration; Christ is the Light Original, the Glory of Heaven; through fallen, sinful men the light passes, and is diverged into millions of rays of every kind; He intervenes in that Incarnation of God found in Jesus Christ, and men are suddenly awakened to the fact that He is Light, and that in Him there is no darkness.

Such a parable of light, with its application to Christ, ought to stimulate enquiry, and thus compel men to ask earnestly whether such conceptions are spiritually true; or, if they are mere analogies and correspondencies which may be explained in some other way? It can be seen that the thoughts of men are turning Christward; the steep hill has been climbed by seekers after truth, and the point is reached where men must choose whether they will continue to gaze westward into the darkness, or turn about and face the east; in plain words, seek for true science in Christ the Light of the World. The chief object in view in this study is to try to find Christ in history by following this method of thought, as already discerned in science, nature, man, and in the Bible; and, it may be found helpful here to explain briefly what the method means, and indicate in varied ways how His method is traceable. It has to be remembered that the stage of thought is spiritual; in other words it is not limited by physical conceptions; it is not confined by psychic representations or conceptions; it is intellectual, moral, spiritual, and thus it is science of a kind that requires to be understood and its method carefully observed. The meaning of the method may be explained in this way; it is well known that musical sounds are classed in octaves; and that the colours upon the solar spectrum may be described in a similar way; and the care-

ful study of the physical sciences of chemistry, physics, spectrum analysis, biology, anatomy, physiology, etc., are in the most mysterious manner found to respond to this rhythm of movement that exists throughout creation. If this is found to be correct, then it will not appear very strange if the psychic world of thought corresponds with the physical world of the senses, seeing that they are translated into thoughts through the avenues of the special senses. Further, as it is conceived that all intellectual concepts are derived from the psychic world, it is conceivable that the correspondencies will continue in that realm also ; and still further, if man has fallen away from God, and become a moral ruin, then his restoration in Christ will follow upon the same lines. The conception being that nature is built up upon a definite method, that man in his being corresponds with nature, that Christ is the perfect man representing the ideal as the Archetype of creation ; and, that as Jesus Christ, He harmonises all things and thoughts ; in Him they subsist and consist ; and He is that perfect Light of Divine Truth required by men to bring them back to their home in God, the heavenly Father.

It may be suggested for consideration that such questions as Whence ? When ? Why ? What ? How ? Who, or for Whom ? Whereunto ? and Whether ? seem to fit into this divine order ; they are the means by which man rises above the physical and psychical, and reaches, or may reach, the highest spiritual concepts. Thus men have asked by their keen intellects in the realm of science and philosophy from whence has come that visible, material creation, perceived by the special senses, and the answer given is that the ultimate concept is a power named Force, or energy. 2. Whence the cause that produces living organic structures of every kind ? The answer supplied is that they have been derived from Life, and that all that has lived physically is derived from a principle of life not cognisable by the intellect of man. 3. Whence that power known as Spirit, the seeing, knowing power in the universe, and in man ? The conception reached is that the spirit implanted in living creatures is one in kind ; it is divine ; it is not physical energy or matter ; it is not living organised structure ; it is above these in order, and they are the servants by which spirit operates. 4. Whence that power known as the Mind, or memory, that necessary help-meet of the spirit ? It is not spirit ; it is the psychic, the soul, the means by which there is development in thought, powers of comparison,

treasures of thought, persistence, continuation and recognition. 5. Whence power of intellect, the means by which man reasons and gains abstract knowledge? It is a special endowment possessed by man, and by it he rises above the lower creatures and becomes like God in knowledge. 6. Whence that moral nature possessed by man? It is the twin power of the intellect, and lord in man; because, in the light of true knowledge, of order and law, man becomes a responsible creature as subject to law, and thus able to comprehend that with knowledge of truth there ought to follow righteousness, faithfulness and obedience to the Divine Lawgiver. This is man in the image and likeness of God; the Christ has created man according to the Divine Archetype; it is here that possible unity and harmony ought to exist, because the Christ and the man stand face to face, and the man sees this divine likeness. Whence that which is named evil, sin, disease, darkness, sorrow, trouble, death, the grave, the fear of judgment, and a future of weal or woe? This is the mystery of evil; it is hidden in the darkness of the past; men have not been able to throw much light upon this problem; and, what they have seen is not in the light, but through signs, symbols, myths, legends, and other means, by which men struggle to express their thoughts, as to their bondage, slavery, degradation, weakness, sinfulness, and helplessness; they know that they are enslaved and wretched, and thus the cry throughout the ages has ever been, Who will deliver us from this unhappy state? Who will crush the head of the serpent evil? Who will overthrow death and the devil and bring to man life, light and immortality? 7. Whence the Deliverer, the Mighty Son of God, the Saviour? 8. Whence the availing merit of the Eternal Divine Sacrifice of Love for man's redemption? 9. Whence the Spirit, named Holy of that Deliverer come to men under the symbols of Fire and Wind? 10. Whence the power of that Spirit in entering into men for their spiritual regeneration and restoration to God? 11. Whence the power that has moved men to be imitators of this Deliverer and ever moving them as by a Divine order to seek after true knowledge? 12. Whence the power that has changed many men from being like the serpent, or wild beasts, destroying each other, and changed them into moral, law-abiding people who seek to live righteously, a spiritual life, in the fear of God and in love to Christ and men?

Having interrogated by Whence? this Kingdom of God in

its twelvefold forms and thus arrived at a conception of what is meant by the method of Christ, it is advisable to proceed, and apply the other questions in their order and observe what responses will be given to such enquiries. When ? deals with time and its manifestations ; and thus this line of enquiry should be of special interest to chronologers, who would fain get conclusive evidence as to the historic becoming of all that has existed. Out of the eternal whence there has come time ; and time whether conceived as a hand-breath, a day, a year, a cycle of years, the ages, or even as a tale that is being told, is the Son of the Eternal ; in other words the Christ of God ; the Archetype and the Fulness of all Being. When does not enquire into scientific relations ; rather, in a sense, it is deductive ; it soars above details, and marks great stages of progression and of development. It is the vision of the seer, not to be fixed down to a day and date ; but as marking those stages of the Divine manifestations, as realised by Whence ? definite facts, that may be spiritually apprehended by the spiritual sons of God.

With the question Why ? it is felt that men enter a more subtle, invisible, indescribable, atmosphere of thought. There is an apparent audacity, unfitness, impertinence even, in sinful men turning round and brusquely asking the Eternal, and the Son of the Eternal, Why ? Yet, whilst to the full granting that man is unfit and unworthy thus to question the Eternal it may be remembered that if God is pleased to open a door for enquiry for the sons of men, he means that they may enter at that door, and make the enquiries that are suitable in such a realm of thought. When the Holy Spirit says, " I have set before thee an open door," it is not wrong to enter in and pray that the Spirit may be pleased to reveal why God, the Eternal, has been pleased to reveal to men that which is natural, and that which is spiritual ? Only the Spirit of God fully comprehends the works and the Word of God ; thus, whether men know it or not, all that they know of God comes to them by His Spirit. Is not this a confession of complete ignorance on the part of men ? They find themselves in this great kingdom of God, in all its marvellous diversities ; this temple of God with all its symbols and signs ; this house of God with all its mysteries ; and, surely, it is not so very strange that as every new perception and conception is reflected from the souls of men the ever-returning question from hearts and lips should be Why ? The child gazes upon the pictures he sees and he is ever asking, Why ? The young

man too soon, and too often, forgets to ask, Why? and the tendency in his mind is to ask What? The intellectual man forgets pictures and things, and his desire is to know How? The thoughtful moral man reflects upon all that he sees and knows, and his questions are Who? and for Whom? as well as Why? and What? It is the man in house, temple, kingdom, and universe, that seeks for God, the living God; and all around and within him, God is there, in His Works, His Word, and His Holy Spirit. Thus it must be, and it is only man spiritually endowed that is thus privileged to draw near to God. The mystery of God is in the man, it is man; and it is what ought to be expected that man should desire to know, obey, and love God. But what if such thoughts as these are for the children in the House of God; and it can be conceived that the Holy Spirit is beckoning men to advance, to consider, to think upon, what may be termed the mysteries of the Spirit? Then this is indeed a very difficult problem to face; it is where the shoes must be removed from the feet, and the face veiled, because in a real and true sense, this is holy ground, and the spirits of men cannot look upon the Spirit of God. The trend of thought is in this direction; the Whence? veils the Eternal, God; the When? speaks of time, and the invisible Form of the Archetype; and, Why? seems to turn the attention to space and all its contents; to numbers, that is arithmetic, in all their diversified relations; and to mathematics, or geometrical forms, in all their dimensions. These are the abstract sciences which lie at the root of all designs and purposes that are known to men; thus, in this connection, the question Why? means also Wherefore? unto what end does space, numbers, dimensions, plans, purposes, and designs exist? Are they not the sevenfold, manifold wisdom of God as causes and effects, as spiritual order, as the very Being of the Holy Spirit? Even as the Eternal dwells in the light ineffable, and in the darkness inscrutable; and true forms cannot be conceived in the Archetype; so here, is it conceivable that men can fathom, number, and measure space? And, is it probable that in the ages to come that they will fully comprehend the Divine Eternal Wisdom?

With the question What? the attitude of the thoughts are changed; the vision is turned earthward and up into the starry heavens, and man is seen gazing upon the manifested works of the Holy Spirit as manifested and revealed in creation and in redemption. In the empiric world of sensuous experience men

think that they know what the visible creation is ; and perhaps wise men, philosophers, and theologians have vainly conceived that they knew all about creation and redemption, and could explain What they are in their relations and being. But the time has come when such knowledge is seen to be imperfect and not true to the facts ; the empiric is the childlike ; the wisdom of the wise is not divine wisdom ; and men have specially to thank inductive science for grappling with this problem, and almost bringing it to an issue. The revolution of thought that has taken place in this realm is great and wonderful ; science has analysed matter and energy, things tangible and material, to such an extent, that scientists are compelled to confess their belief that these have no real existence ; there is no matter in the universe ; the ultimate analysis is brought to terms of power, force, or energy, and the One Force is the source from whence the forms of energy, or what is named matter, are developed. As it is with the physical inorganic realm, so it is with the organic world that is produced by life ; organic forms do not abide, they are the ever-changing forms of that changeless Life which it is believed lies at the root of all that becomes living. The change in the order of men's thoughts is so great that the strange conception and expression of the thoughts of a scientific thinker has taken this form, that there is no state of death ; life reigns and the cycles of changes are not physical but spiritual, not material but living—it may be immortal and eternal. With such conceptions of the physical world, actually transfiguring nature into spiritual concepts, it can be seen that the veil between the natural and spiritual is getting almost transparent : and when it is freely confessed that science is unable to assist men to solve the problem of being, the conclusion seems imminent that this problem of the ages is not one that can be solved by men. It may not be out of place to affirm that this issue has really come to pass ; for such terms, used by philosophy, as the Absolute, the Unknowable, the Ultimate, emphasise the thought that Being, as a problem for the intellect, for science, is not admissible. As it is with Force and Life, as principles, so it is with Spirit, Mind, Intellect, the Moral nature, and Grace ; they are ultimates in their own realms, but what they are in their Being it is not given to men to understand as a result of scientific inquiry. Whilst it is true that the intellect ought to tremble in the presence of related ultimates, and veil its face in the presence of the Ultimate, it may be suggested

that men are not left altogether in the darkness in the consideration of this problem. By faith men can see the invisible ; but what they cannot escape is the fact that behind all related conditions there is the Real Being ; and, puzzle themselves as men may try to do, this natural belief must be accepted ; it is a fact upon which his own conscious being rests ; and it cannot, in the nature of things, be put aside or repudiated. Therefore, as it is seen to be fruitless work to seek to know, What the Being of creation is ? it may not be without fruit to listen to the teaching of Christ, by trying to conceive the relations of the Spirit to the Visible creation. The line of thought here tends in this direction ; the Creation and work of Redemption are not things made out of nothings ; but, as indicated by order and scientific laws, the visible, natural, and spiritual are the work of the Spirit ; they are spiritual, and may be conceived as existent in space, as subject to arithmetic and geometry, as purposes of nature and grace, as wise designs fitted for definite ends ; in fact, that God, the Eternal, in the Form of Christ, by the Holy Spirit, is immanent in creation, and thus it becomes inconceivable that man can comprehend this Reality as a thing or things. What he perceives is Divine Power, Eternal Life, and Perfect Wisdom, as made manifest by the Spirit in the universe.

With the question How ? it can be seen that the attitude of the inquirer is changed ; the problem to be studied is not What ? but the scientific order as discoverable by men of science. Empiricism through the past ages never wearied in thinking upon the mysterious How of the method of creation ; but the failure surely was very great in proportion to the amount of work done. Men thought they knew, and by deductive schemes of philosophy and theology they did their best to enlighten those who, it appeared to them, were found sitting in the darkness. Inductive science has completely changed this position ; it can be said that men do know something of the operations of nature by the physical sciences ; they have advanced from one point to another until they have discovered order and laws ; and they have so studied the history of physical life, in its order of development, that they conceive an organic unity as existing throughout the whole realm of life. It is not necessary to enter into detail upon this point ; the important fact to remember is that somehow men have been seeking after God and Truth ; they have been guided by the Spirit of God in their labours ; they have searched



into the depths of space by astronomy ; they have been numbering stars, atoms, lines of force, and even ions and electrons ; they have measured distances, dimensions, and weights ; they have been following hard after God, the Spirit, thinking His wise thoughts and finding out His all-wise purposes and designs ; they have been guided to discern order, and to discover law ; and law is spiritual thought, the work of the Spirit. Many men of science have been tunnelling in the darkness, ignorant of the Light of life, and yet they have been the servants of Christ, the Truth, as guided by the Spirit of Truth, to reveal truth to men. The work and guidance of the Holy Spirit is very wonderful ; it is a marvel and miracle of grace that He should deign to use men so unfit to do the Will of God, and to reveal to them the method of Christ. The question How ? as applicable to the Bible, and the realm of Grace in the Bible requires to be followed out in the same order of science, as true related thoughts, Divine Wisdom ; but this will receive more careful attention when considering the subject of the science to be found in the Bible.

With the question Who ? or To Whom ? this Divine revelation in nature and the Bible has come, it is enough to say that it is to, and for, man, the creature of God capable of knowing truth, of being faithful, and obedient to the truth and laws known. It is the moral man that represents the thoughts of God ; it is the good man that reveres and loves God ; it is the righteous man that obeys the Will, the laws of God. This is God's likeness ; and it is to this man that authority and dominion is given. This ideal man as true, good, righteous, is God's representative ; the crown is placed upon his head ; he reigns upon the earth, and he is blessed in his being, in his thoughts, words, and works. This truth may be conceived as summed up in the following words : " Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever," or, in other words, the purpose and design of God in man's being, is to reveal His glory, to make manifest His power, wisdom, goodness, and love ; and it is the privilege of man to realise this design, purpose, work, and will of God, in himself, so that he might enjoy, live in the presence of God in His spirit and likeness. This is, in a sense, the consummation of creation ; it is all very good ; there is a long pause in the story of the life of man ; the curtain falls upon the fair scene ; something happened somewhere ; what might, and ought to have been has not taken place ; and when the curtain rises again it is upon a scene of intellectual

differences, of moral perversions and struggles ; the divine is subject to the serpent ; the spiritual to the natural ; man is degraded to the psychic stage of being, but with powers, if utilised, that may be the means of regeneration and restoration to manhood and God likeness. It seems to be a mistake to dogmatise upon the Fall of man ; it is a terrible fact ; it cannot be put aside ; it is ingrained into every man's nature ; it is the mother of ignorance, the fountain of disease, the cause of misery, bondage, slavery, cruelty, and every form of evil and darkness. The difficulty is not found in the ignorance, or in such knowledge ; but what men have sought to know, are still anxious to discover, is by what means they may attain deliverance from this state of sin, bondage to evil and the thralldom of death ? If the spiritual ear is laid upon the great heart of humanity, throughout all the ages, among all the nations, it will be felt that although names and methods of thought vary, yet it is true that in legend and myth, philosophy and religion, history and science, the cry is ever the same, it is the cry for breath because of asphyxiation, and of deliverance from the serpent, which like a great boa constrictor has imprisoned and would destroy humanity. The cries, How long ? Why such suffering ? Where is the Deliverer ? Can there be a God who permits such suffering ; and is He not able, not willing, or even careless, about the well-being of the creatures He has made ? Poor souls ! how sad the record, how terrible the ignorance, how perverted the thoughts, how unjust the judgments of men. Alas ! alas ! who can comprehend the width and depth of these questions, and how slow, sure and perfect the works of God must be ? The Will of God, law, development, free-will, knowledge, good and evil, duty and responsibility, light and darkness, truly these are great problems of thought. It is one thing to be sinking in the miry clay and the bottomless pit in the darkness, and a quite different thing to be rescued from that state, and to have the feet firmly set on the Rock of Ages ; but sinner and saint may both be found uttering their complaints against God, being ignorant that this is the way to life, to manhood, and to God-likeness. It is surely foolish for a man to ask such questions as these, Why did God make me thus ? Why must I endure such suffering ? Why must I depart into the darkness of death and the grave ? What have I done that such a lot should be mine that I am kept ever in the darkness and in the shadow of death and suffering, whilst

others seem to enjoy health, prosperity and peace ? They enjoy the sunlight and have no bands in their death. Is it just and right that such things should be ? It may be, nay, it must be true, that God hears such complaints all the day long from the lips and hearts of His weary suffering children. He is very patient and long-suffering, very pitiful and of tender heart, thus He is much misunderstood and maligned by those who know not His compassion, mercy, and love. The necessary all-important steps have been taken for deliverance and for full salvation, but there is a terrible struggle to be settled betwixt good and evil ; and poor foolish impatient children do not apprehend, much less comprehend, all that is involved in this great work of redemption from the powers of evil. Humanly speaking, it would appear to be easier to let men destroy themselves, take the form of the grovelling serpent in the dust, or become degraded into irresponsible wild beasts ; but God's thoughts do not favour such a method of action ; His Love broods over the fallen ; His Grace moves for their salvation ; His pitying eye is upon them ; the door of His mercy is ever wide open for their rescue ; His Son has become Shepherd and Sacrifice, and His Holy Spirit, with a power inconceivable, is warring against evil ; and in due time, the serpent must die, death will be conquered, the grave will be destroyed, and life and immortality will be fully revealed to men by the Gospel of Christ.

It will be sufficient at this stage to suggest the form of development that has taken place in history, specially as revealed to men in the Bible. Thus far the conceptions have been such as experience, empiricism, philosophy and theology have been seeking after in the knowledge of God and Creation, and the issue is the moral man in the likeness of God, followed by the Fall with its evil results. The Bible is conceived as beginning a new spiritual regeneration, or re-creation of man, and it is this great work, in its varied forms of development, as science, that men are called to study. The Creation story in the first chapter of Genesis gives this summation, and consummation, of man in God's likeness as a Creation. The Seed of the new manhood is found in the promise that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, and the Bible history is occupied with this all-important thought on to the Advent of Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the World. In story, myth it may be, living men, signs, symbols, events, a nation, judges, kings and

wise men, worship of God and falling into idolatry, a prosperous nation and a nation in bondage, in exile, sorrow and suffering, repentance and restoration, all these, with the utterances of prophets, prepared the way for the coming of Christ, the Messiah. The Christ is the Divine Man in the Image of God ; He is the Seventh, the Lord of Grace, and thus with Him there begins the spiritual regeneration of mankind. It would be a mistake to take up the thought that the Christ stands apart from man and history until the Advent. He came into humanity as seed of promise at the Fall ; He is the life of humanity in all the ages ; in the fulness of the times He came among men not only as man, but as Son of God, the mysterious Seventh Being, in Whom Archetype and historic development were involved. This is the unique position of Christ. "In Him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and it is as Grace and Truth that He steps into the arena of humanity. Conjoint with this Divine manifestation of the Life of God there was embodied in Christ another Divine manifestation, or revelation ; it is the eighth in order, and in form, and it is summed up in the term Sacrifice, or Suffering for Sin ; and it is by His self-sacrificing life and death that He is the Saviour of the World. The ninth stage of development is that of the coming in power of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ ; the result was Pentecost, the tongues as of fire and the mighty rushing wind. The tenth is the reception by the people, the Church, of the Holy Spirit, not an ecclesiastical body known by that name, but of all men who received the Spirit and thus became living stones in the Spiritual Temple of God. Eleven in the Bible may be represented by the epistles and labours of Paul and others ; and, twelve may be found in the Book of Revelation with its visions and that special revelation, of the New Jerusalem, the City of God, in its descent from Heaven. But it is necessary to remember that although nine to twelve thus complete the Bible, they are also a new beginning for the Christian dispensation among the Gentiles, and in this way they have involved within them the Christian age with its manifold developments.

I. It will be observed that in this very brief sketch of the Method of Christ there has arisen three distinct conceptions of man as found in 1, the Creation ; 2, the regeneration in Christ ; and 3, the restoration of man to spiritual union, communion and fellowship with God through Christ, by the continuous operations

of the Holy Spirit. A similar conception is followed in the three dispensations of the Patriarchs, Israel and Christianity. The first is the work of God and in it man is passive, or not conscious of God ; he is conceived as becoming man, and in this process of development he has no choice, he is the work, the creation, the image of God, in truth and righteousness. The second reveals man as fallen and sinful ; there is the age, long struggle betwixt good and evil ; the serpent would destroy mankind by guile or force ; and mankind is thus the ground for contest, struggle, and battle, in this spiritual war carried on betwixt the powers of Heaven and Hell, of light and darkness. The issue of this second great drama of events is the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ as man upon the earth ; and, it is by, and in, Him, that mankind is regenerate. This is not a dogmatic statement the result of theological thought ; it is the plain truth as matter of fact, as provable by scientific order in history and in the Bible. The third is, in a sense, a continuation of that development of which Christ is the glory ; but, as can be easily seen, the method of operation is quite different, regeneration and recreation have taken place, and the work of the Holy Spirit during the spiritual age is that of the inward spiritual recreation, regeneration, and restoration of mankind to the image of Christ and the likeness of God. If these things are so, then it is time for men to reflect upon these wonderful works of God ; because, it is now plain that foolish sinful men have never understood their true position ; they have as a rule been fighting on the side of the enemy ; and the real worker throughout history has been the Regenerator, the Holy Spirit. To men, it has to be confessed, in the words of Daniel, belong shame, " Confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him ; neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God to walk in His laws which He set before us by His servants the prophets." This problem is very complex in its manifold details, but it is very wonderful in what way simple natural signs assist the intellect in perceiving great truths. It seems that there is no sign possessed by men more wonderful than that of light, the prism, and the solar spectrum ; it is the consummation of Divine thought in the realm of matter and motion, the visible universe, and it is in that sign men find in symbol the unity and harmony of their own being. As.

already suggested, fallen man from the chaos of the world's spiritual ruins, looks upon Christ and His Method of thought and it is the beautiful figure of light, the prism, divergence, a second prism, convergence, and out of a chaos, that contains invisible order, the revelation is Christ, the Light of the World. Here the imagery of the sign seems to take another form ; and it may require a little study to catch the fitness and consummate beauty of the sign. The natural sign rises to the spiritual analogy in man, the image of God ; it is extended and seen to be the fit symbol for the recreation in Christ, the truth as it is in Him as developed in the Old Testament, and as refracted through Him as the Light of the World. But this sign may be still further utilised, and applied to the New Testament, because in Christ, the new spiritual creation, there is the light passing by the Spirit to the Gentile nations, and again re-refraction and the flashing forth of the Divine light of Truth upon mankind. One peculiarity in this line of thought is worthy of consideration, it is the division into threes of these developments and manifestations. In the natural the processes 1, the light ; 2, the prism ; 3, the refracted rays ; 4, the second prism ; 5, the re-refracted rays ; and 6, light. In the spiritual, 1, God is as Light, ; 2, Christ is as the prism, form, archetype ; 3, the refracted rays speak of the Spirit as derived from Christ with all that is involved in space, arithmetic, geometry, design, etc. ; 4, is visible form, the creation with all the Divine wisdom involved in the works of God ; 5, the intellect, truth, the re-refraction of the thoughts of God in men ; and 6, the Christ as the Man, the Light, Moral Life, and Glory of the world. With 7 begins the new, still higher, Divine order ; this represents God as in Christ the Eternal Light, Redeeming Love ; 8, is Jesus Christ in the form of man, the One true Sacrifice for Sin ; 9, is the *thrice* Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth, Grace and Love ; the diverging rays of all that is in Christ ; 10, is the body of Christ, the spiritual Church, in which these rays are caught, as the new spiritual life ; 11, the re-refracted rays of Divine truth in spiritual men and women ; and 12, the consummation of Truth, the moral life, and the grace of God in Divine Love as made manifest to, and received by, mankind.

II. With these conceptions of the objective universe, and of the Bible as one Divine system of revelation which man is privileged to study, it is not necessary to take up in detail that microcosm of the universe, as it is embodied, in one man. But it is to be re-

membered that in studying man, as individual, in scientific order, he is, at this stage, an objective study just in the same sense as the great universe. There is this difference to be observed : in the universal the study begins with the inorganic creation and proceeds in the order of development to the final restoration of all things in Christ ; with man, the inorganic is involved in the organic, and thus it is life, and the living, that is the stand-point of study. There is fitness in this ; because as can be seen the All, and the One, is conceived as summed up in the Image of the All and One, the Son, the living Archetype of God, the reality of all being. These thoughts are metaphysical in their nature ; they give expression to what is true and real ; but they are not in any sense to be accepted as pantheistic in their tendency. As involved within the range of science and of faith they seem to suggest that a man is not an undesigned concourse of atoms ; he is the work of God, and he is formed in the image of Christ. If these thoughts are kept in view then it is only necessary for the thinker to follow the same order in the development of man as of the universe ; the two are in perfect scientific correspondence ; and what is in nature and grace is also the ideal for man. In fact, the living man has conceived all that is in his environment ; and, humanly speaking, all that is in God is in Christ as manifested Being, and all that is in Christ as Archetype is in man as the image of Christ. Man is the epitome of nature, and they respond and correspond together. The natural man falls from his high estate ; he takes the serpent form that crawls in the dust, the earthly ; the divine and spiritual intervene, and there is the ages' long development into the new, the perfect man Christ ; and by the Holy Spirit, the Adam, the earthly man, is transfigured into the likeness of the Son of God. The figure of thought may be carried still further in this way ; the universal becomes man and through Christ, the Man, the reversion, or the development, is to mankind, the universal. All has been derived from God through Christ, and by Him the All is brought back to God the All in all.

III. It may be said that to argue in this way cannot be of much real value because the reasoning is as in a great circle ; and thus there is nothing new introduced into the problems discussed. But this would be a very short-sighted view of the whole realm of thought, and it would fail to apprehend the manifold aspects of the complex problems to be considered. The position being considered here is not the unity and harmony of nature, or of man,

it is the varied aspects at which they can be seen, as in a sense independent problems ; in what way they throw light upon each other ; and the wonderful unity and harmony found in all the varied aspects of study. In the first, the universal, it has been conceived that, in a sense, God is revealed ; in the second the concept of Life is introduced, and this is the special symbol of Christ, as the abstract Source of Life, and Christ as Man the Life of mankind. In this third way of looking at these problems it will follow that the attitude of thought is that of the Spirit ; and it must be confessed that this is a subject far too complex, difficult, and intricate for the human mind. The realm is one of such ..... inexpressible, abstract concepts, that the student must confess utter inability to render into concrete forms that can be grasped the conceptions that exist within this realm. Taking the abstract concept of space, what can men make of it but the vision of an endless immensity, a capacity of, and for, being, which cannot be limited. Is this anything like the Holy Spirit ? Is it not an expression of ignorance and incapacity ? It is less than the thought of a single drop in the ocean ; or of a star in limitless space ; comparison is useless ; the power to compare is not possessed ; and, yet, to think of it, wonder of wonders, the universal order of being exists within these mighty arms of God, thought upon by man as the Holy Spirit. If such a vision suggests the infinity of God and the finiteness of man, then what can man make of the revelations by the Spirit to mankind ? That the Spirit of God possesses all power in the universe is a thought that lies at the root of all development ; that by Him life is manifested must be taken for granted ; but by what order of thought will man be able to conceive the manifold wisdom of the Spirit in the revelation of creation, providence and redemption ? It is not enough to take the physical sciences one by one ; by numbers as in chemistry, geometry, in astronomy, the relations of spectrum analysis and physics, and say these are the works of the Holy Spirit in Divine wisdom ; there are all the mysteries of life and organic forms to be considered, from the first seed of life in the earth to the manifold living organisms that have existed ; or, if the vision is narrowed down to one human being, then there is the germ seed in the womb onward to the perfect child and the man. It is true that men have tried to think that they could ascribe to Nature all this Divine Wisdom ; but surely such men have failed to see that they were simply giving to the Holy Spirit a naturalistic name ;



they were not merely putting a cloak over their own ignorance, they were also denying the Holy One, and worshipping a false god of their own creating. It may be that in days to come men of science will think more truly and loyally in their labours ; but, in a special sense, this realm of thought seems to point to the arithmetician and geometrician, to architect, surveyor, and builder, because in truth all their labours are begun, continued, and ended in the Divine wisdom of the Holy Spirit. If the thoughts are turned from the physical to the psychical realm must it not be confessed that the marvellous thoughts that meet men here are still more wonderful, and altogether beyond their comprehension. What is the spirit of man ? Is it a drop out of the ocean of Infinite Eternal Spirit ? Is it as one atom, or one star, in the immensities of space ? What is this mysterious power that sees, hears, thinks, perceives, compares, reasons, believes, and reflects, in some measure, the Spirit of God ? What is this Divine energy that moves in the soul of man, that is active to relate and correlate thoughts ; that reaches up to abstract concept signs ; that numbers, measures, and weighs creation ; that designs, plans and carries out great purposes in the world ? What is this subtle power that cannot know its own being ; and yet, from a creation of chaos, and a soul in ruins, it proceeds to elaborate a cosmos that is divine, in physical form, in psychic thought, in intellectual order, in moral beauty and goodness, and in spiritual perfection ? How is it that the spirit in man can perceive the seeds of divine wisdom, plant them in suitable soil, and in due time sit down under the shadow of the famous trees of the knowledge of good and evil, and of life ? What is this spirit that may become a perverted dark thing, dia-magnetic to the Spirit of the universe, living in darkness, and yet can be regenerate, throw off its dia-magnetic influences, and become para-magnetic, and flash forth into light the glory of the Spirit, as divine in truth and righteousness ? What is this power that can overthrow the power of sin, crush the head of the serpent evil, tread triumphant upon death and the grave, and with a life that is immortal, rise above all the things of time and sense ? How is it that this spirit of man, amid all these movements, gradually changes its polarity, and its identity ? In the lower stages of being it is known that the polarity is reversed and egoism is regnant ; but in the higher stages the polarity is Christward ; the man is no longer an isolated ego ; it is Christ's Spirit that reigns in his being, and he is

identified with Christ, one with, and in, Him. What is it to become a son of God, an imitator of Christ, a patient sufferer, a sacrifice well-pleasing to God? What is this mystery of a renewed spirit living in a new regenerate creation, with all creature things subject, and the food of the spirit, the luscious fruits of the tree of knowledge, and the living bread, as the fruit of the tree of life? Behind all these signs and symbols, these efforts to reach spiritual realities, there is the divine, the spiritual, and the eternal; men grope after them in the darkness; they are seen as through a veil darkly; but when the spiritual day is come then it may be conceived that men will understand that there are limits which the creature cannot surmount; and the very desire to trespass in such fields of thought will have passed away for ever.

IV. In thus thinking upon the method of Christ in the universe, in man, and in the Bible there is the conception of development in each realm of thought, and also in the order of the principles, or powers which lie at the root of nature and man. The many subtle thoughts that arise in the third division are very complex; they do not take definite form, but they are suggestive, and it cannot be said that they fall into scientific order. With this fourth division it has to be confessed that the vision is not clear, but the cause of the indefiniteness is not so much the subject matter, it lies in the fact that men have not been able to learn, to understand, all that has to be received in psychic form in the soul of man. This is the difficulty; by means of Science the universe or the physical sciences, as objective studies, have been in their great outlines apprehended; and in a similar manner, as related to man, the same sciences have been studied and their relations conceived. But in these the starting points for development begin with the physical, and the train of reasoning is objective, as if the facts existed apart from the psychic nature of man. With the study of the spirit and its development the psychic realm of thought begins, and side by side there must follow the development of the soul, not as a limited psychic realm, but in full harmony with the spirit. To revert to the conception of the light, the prism and the refracted rays of light; it can be seen that betwixt prism and prism, the refraction and the re-refraction, there exists a realm of colour and darkness; it is undefined and not easily definable; and yet it is known that ray meets ray, there is order in that darkness, and the issue is, upon the screen, the convergence of the rays into white light. Just as

that divergence and convergence are known to exist in spectrum analysis, so it is conceived that in the mysterious realm of the soul there is a psychic spiritual development; the fact is not to be questioned; and it is in common language known as the mind, or memory. If then it is realised that this silent companion, and help-meet of the spirit, is a true realm of existence, of being, co-ordinate with the spirit, responding to and corresponding with the physical world, then it must follow that this psychic realm is of great spiritual importance. At present it is in the state of eclipse; it is a realm of darkness not of light, a great veil is cast over its operations; and, in fact, the mystery of man's being will not be dispelled until this eclipse of soul has passed away. It may be conceived that the mystery of this dia-magnetic condition of the soul is not psychic only, it is also moral, and the para-magnetic change will not come until the moral and spiritual are regnant in the soul, and the organic life is regnant over the powers that work for physical death. It may be that this realm of thought is not quite so dark as it has been; it is something to be able to say that in the very nature of things this realm exists; that its normal condition is not darkness; that there is a hope that the eclipse will pass away, and then, in the light that is in Christ, men will see even as they are seen. The attempt is not made here to consider the problem of the development of the soul of man; these relations will synchronise with the spirit in its operations and with the physical order.

V. The conceptions that have been expressed, it will be observed, follow in the order of the method of Christ, and the stage now reached is where a new departure is made of a very important kind. The first stage is that of the universe in the Light of God; the second the light of truth as Life in a man; the third the marvellous works of the Spirit; and the fourth the creation of the Spirit, as within the soul of man, responding to, and corresponding with, the Light of God, the Life in Christ and the Wisdom that is in the Holy Spirit. The new stage of development to be briefly considered is that of man as an intellectual, rational being, richly endowed by the Spirit of God, and thus enabled to reason upon, relate and correlate, in empiric and scientific order, all the knowledge perceived by the spirit and received and conceived as abstract thoughts in the soul. The stage reached is to be conceived as reaching to and passing beyond empiricism; the effort made by means of the intellect is to place

in scientific order, as sciences, all that is treasured up in the soul as knowledge. But, surely, it may be said this is only expressing in another form all that has been repeated in various forms over and over again. In a sense this is true, but there is this great difference ; this work is above the psychic realm ; and it is utilising what is psychic, to produce in thought and word, a spiritual realm of abstract rational knowledge. It has been assumed that all the earlier stages or realms have been developed from the natural to the spiritual ; here the man becomes a spiritual man ; he succeeds to his heritage of truth, and he proceeds to take possession of this goodly land so long promised to the faithful, but kept as the possession of the idolatrous heathen who do not know the value of the land they enjoy. But the mistake must not be made of supposing that the departure for that land of promise is equivalent to possession. In the spiritual allegory or history, which throws light upon this subject, there is a period of wandering in the Wilderness ; and after that the land must be fought for, the enemy overthrown ; and possession and division attained. Science, by the intellect of man, has begun this great work ; the organised sciences have divided the realms of truth, or begun to do so ; but it is not yet time to begin boasting, for the Jordan has not been crossed and the conquest only extends to the trans-Jordan realm, to the portions of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh ; in other words, science has taken possession of the psychical sciences, and also discerned something of the physical, moral and spiritual realms of thought, but their scientific order is not fully known. The conception here is that to a very large extent the knowledge possessed by men is empiric ; this empiric knowledge has to be formulated into orderly science, and into law, as organised truth in the souls of men ; and, at the same time, this scientific knowledge has to become a written objective realm of thought, free to all men who desire to possess this knowledge. It can be seen that such a development as this is of the greatest spiritual importance ; it is, in fact, man going forth to meet the Spirit of God in all His works ; and scientific order is seen to be the spiritual thoughts of God, the light of truth and of divine law in the physical, psychical, moral and spiritual realms of thought.

VI. Such knowledge as this, now considered to be in a state of realisation by science, is very different from empiricism, philosophy, or theology ; men feel their feet upon the rock of eternal law, the

thoughts and the will of God ; they look round upon the restless ocean by which they are surrounded, and smile upon the threatening waves as in their fury, or in their playfulness, they rush onward against the Rock of Ages. This will be true knowledge ; and if the experiences of men, sweet and bitter, which they have passed through, in eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, have opened up realms of thought, not desirable, it must be granted that such a revelation of God as men can now see transcends and transfigures in a marvellous manner that moral realm which is the natural home of mankind. If only men could see this way of life clearly and the region beyond, it might also be written of them that for this great joy set before them they too would rise above time and sense, and despising cross and shame, rejoice with great joy in the prospect of one day being able to see God, in His works, and specially in the great victory of grace over evil, and of love over satanic hatred. There is much truth in the thought that the cause of all the evils and sorrows that men endure is to be found in ignorance ; but ignorance here is a deep-rooted disease of the soul ; it is being dia-magnetic to what is heavenly ; it is darkness and perversion, and it is a chaos instead of order. It is not strange that the very roots of the being of man cries out against this ignorance, darkness, disease, perversion ; the condition is horribly abnormal ; it is the vestibule of hell ; and it is simply impossible that man thirsting for God, desiring to be found in His image, could rest in peace in such a state of being. But this suggests the thought that the man though ignorant and unhappy as without true knowledge, cannot be satisfied with knowledge ; it is not knowing that is man's great need ; it is to be true and right in the being of the soul ; and, out of this state to manifest in righteous doing, the true, normal and right being of God-likeness. Being is God ; men must try to realise this truth ; it is the foundation-stone of all truth ; and departure from this truth in any way is fatal ; it is refraction into the darkness ; it is disease ; it is perversion of the spirit ; it is darkness of the soul ; it is ignorance and thus contrary to science ; it is chaos ; it is the rule of the serpent, the domination of evil and the end is death and hell. Men cry out that God is the Unknowable ; what they mean is that they have turned away from God ; that they will not seek God in the right way ; that they set themselves up as gods ; and truly such behaviour is discreditable, shameful, ungrateful, and despicable, because it is taking a small portion of that

Being lent to them, and turning it against God, the Fountain of all Being. It is evident that in the search for the ideal man ; the man right in being, in life, spirit, thought, knowledge and action, that he is not to be found amongst the earthly sons of Adam. It is the old story of the refracted rays of the prism ; the light is in them, but the rays are refracted, bent out of the straight path, and there is "none righteous ; no, not one." Therefore, in this matter it is necessary to put aside all biographies, philosophies and theologies of men and try to conceive, in the light of the Method of Christ, the Man named the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven ; and by studying His life, thought, words and works, see if He fulfils this ideal of manhood, that is dawning upon men. It is here that the value of true knowledge will be found useful ; it is entrusted to science by the study of facts, in their true relations, to reach the ideal, true order, or law. Now law as thus conceived, is not a matter of experience, or of empiricism, it is that Divine order immanent in creation and redemption ; it is that upon which man lays hold as the very true Word of God, and the faithful, the unchanging method in which God works. Physical scientists may express their thoughts in other words, but the facts are the same ; there is an end to all wrangling when the laws are understood, and it is clearly seen that law is the Will, the Way, and the Work of God. Law, in this sense, is not subject to change ; it is the light by which man can walk safely ; it is spiritual illumination ; it is what man requires, not to analyse law, but to give light to see the things and thoughts that are governed by law. It is important to get clear conceptions upon this intricate problem, so that there may not be any mystification about the abstract term, law, when used truly by science. Law brings man face to face with ultimate reality, thought, being ; law is will ; and thus the conclusion reached by law is that the works of God reveal His Will, and this is the Way by which men can ascend into Heaven, and be enabled to know and do the Will of God. It is within this realm of thought that men find Jesus Christ ; to do the Will of God was to Him His very life ; and, no matter how men may stumble in their thoughts in trying to understand, to measure Him, they find that He is above and beyond them ; He is Heavenly and in Heaven, that is in perfect harmony with the Will of God. The idea of critics and earthly men measuring Christ is something exquisite as an example of self-conceit and self-assertion ; it is grotesque, and yet

so silly that it may be well-conceived that the angels do not know whether to weep with pity, or laugh in derision, at such folly. He is the Standard of all knowledge as Truth and Law ; and thus the absurdity of men who know not the truth, and have not attained to any standard of law, as divine and universal, attempting to measure Him is pitiful and painful in the extreme. Christ cannot be measured by men ; it is His method that reveals Him to men, men to each other, and man to himself ; and He is greater than His method, just as life is more than organised forms. The Man Jesus Christ is the revelation of what men ought to be ; and it is not for men to puzzle themselves about His Being ; is it not enough that He has revealed the Father ; that He has trodden the pathway of life with its sorrows ; that He has taken upon Himself our sins and their consequences ; and that He has left us an example that we might follow in His footsteps ? This is the strange, the unique thought about Christ which men are unable to grasp ; He is the Being of all that He is, and He condescends to limit that Being into manhood, to appear as Jesus, the Saviour, so that He might save, redeem, regenerate, and restore mankind to the life and favour of God. The truth is magnificent ; it is the necessary result that flows from the Fall and sin ; it might well be thought to be inconceivable, and yet it is God-like ; it has been conceived ; it has been actually carried out in the arena of history, and Christ is graciously teaching men, by His own method of thought, how it has all been accomplished. Men are said to stagger and fall because of unbelief, and that they find themselves unable to conceive the possibility of the Truth of the Gospel in Christ ; it would be just as unreasonable to deny God and creation, order and law, because truth is not discerned by the senses but by Science ; and it may yet be fully proved to be true beyond question, that the recreation of man is as much within the realm of Science as is the visible creation. The position, therefore, as related to Christ, as the perfect Man, is not one for dabblers in Science, Philosophy, or Criticism ; it is necessary to study the Man, in the light of His method ; and only after careful study could an opinion be given which would be of real scientific value. The Spirit of God, it is said, was in Him without measure ; His soul was stainless and pure, reflecting the thoughts and the purity of God ; His Divine Wisdom and utterances will not be challenged by those competent to form an opinion, for His thoughts transcend the thoughts of men ; He spake as no

other man could speak, with authority ; and where men thought themselves wise, clever, skilful, He exposed their ignorance by His Divine Wisdom. His life, as Man, finds its test and trial in the Temptation in the Desert ; He is the Man who will not sin for bread ; for the lustings of the flesh ; for the lordship of the world ; or for the lust of power and glory.

It is not necessary to enter into detail here as to His faithfulness to death as Saviour of men and true Sacrifice for sin ; the perfection of that Work is ratified in Heaven, where He lives and reigns as Priest and King, and will reign until all his enemies are subdued. In all these things He transcends in glory the conceptions of the redeemed ; in the present stage of revelation men may well shrink from expressing their thoughts upon such matters, but there ought not to be any hesitation in saying, " Behold the Man," the One unique Man who cannot reasonably be compared with other men ; and to Whom the very noblest men are not worthy to be compared.

VII. The transition of thought from Jesus the Man to Christ the Son of God can now, in a sense, by the method of Christ, be in a measure considered. There is a complete break in the development ; the intellectual and the moral are surpassed, and the Divine spiritual order of Being is introduced. It is utterly useless to attempt to define the Divine as distinct from the divine-human ; men cannot apprehend Being or comprehend what it is in essence ; the work of science is to study the order of the development of the power, or principle, manifested ; and thus the end of the study is orderly sequence and conceived as law. As has been already suggested the Divine Grace, as applied to Christ, was not introduced into mankind when Christ was born in Bethlehem ; the inception, or conception, of Divine Grace, is linked with the fall of man, and the loss of that state which is compared to the Garden of Eden, or to the Garden of the Lord. The history of man as found in Genesis, in the redemption from Egypt, the Desert, the nation and kingdom of Israel, the downfall of Israel through idolatry, the captivity in Babylon, and the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine, are all stages in the development of the Divine into fallen humanity, and the climax toward which all these events moved was the Advent of Christ, in the fulness of the times or the ages. It is here that the stage of history is cleared for the revelation, the manifestation, of that event which is central and around which all other events find a subsidiary place. Moses



and the prophets preceded Christ ; they came before Him to prepare the way ; order, as conceived by law, legal and ceremonial, came by Moses ; the moral cries and utterances of the experiences of men came from the heart and lips of the psalmists and prophets ; but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. It may be important to notice these things, because it is at this stage that Christ begins His ministry by opening His mouth and uttering the Parable of the state and condition of those who had left Moses and the prophets behind them, and were preparing, or being prepared, for the Kingdom of Grace in Himself. The past, Moses and the prophets, may be compared with physical form and life which He acknowledges as necessary in the past ; but the blessed state of Grace is different, it is within man, and it consists of those blessed conditions which he states in their order. The poor in spirit are the heirs to the kingdom of Heaven, as compared with the proud who reign upon the earth. Those who mourn are blessed ; they have felt the sting and evil of sin and they will find comfort. The meek of heart have imbibed the right spirit ; with patience they will come into their inheritance—the earth. Those who hunger and thirst to be, and do, what is righteous, their wants shall be fully supplied. The merciful are blessed ; they forgive and they are forgiven. The pure in heart are blessed ; they are like God, and they shall see Him. The peacemakers are blessed—they are like Christ—they shall be called the children of God, for the Divine is made manifest in their lives. Those who are persecuted and suffer for the sake of what is true and right are blessed, for they, too, have taken up their cross and they follow in the footsteps of Christ, their Saviour, Lord, and Master, and the end will be the kingdom of Heaven. It is necessary to point out that these blessings uttered by Christ have a wonderful coincidence, likeness to, and harmony with, what is termed the principles of man's being ; they also synchronise with the order of development in nature, in man, and in the Bible ; in fact, they are so central in the method of Christ that they give the key to the study of His method. They appear to be simple, true, and beautiful spiritual thoughts ; but they are quick with the life of Christ ; His Breath is in them, and thus whatever they touch begins to live and move under their Divine influences. It is with the Beatitudes as with musical sounds in their rhythmic changes, in octaves ; the diversities are endless, the unity and harmony continuous. It can only be sug-

gested here that the conception has arisen as a matter of fact that the Bible in its parts, and as a whole responds to and corresponds with the Beatitudes. If the Gospels are analysed they fall into an order of development similar to that contained in the Beatitudes ; the Book of Genesis gives a similar response ; the history of Israel repeats in manifold forms the same development ; the Epistles and the Book of Revelation take up the same musical rhythm, and thus in the most wonderful manner, the thought is conceived that the Bible as a whole, and in its parts is conceivable as a kingdom, a great work of God, and as capable of scientific construction as the physical sciences.

VIII. It is in this stage of development that the mystery of sin, suffering, evil, disobedience, hatred, pride, ambition, schism, divisions, unbelief and sacrifice for sin, or suffering because of evil, reaches a climax, and the concentration of the power of wickedness falls upon Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the World. Sacrifice and suffering have been enshrined in the history of mankind during the past ages ; they have been the inexplicable mystery ; and perhaps the Book of Job may be considered to be a typical expression of the thoughts of men upon this subject. It may not be out of place to state that as related to this problem the twentieth century, A.D., differs little from the tenth or twentieth century, B.C. Men have been and they still are practically convinced that the healthy, the prosperous, the wise, the powerful, and the good, are happy and blessed ; but the unhealthy, the unsuccessful, those who are not learned and wise, who do not possess power, even though they may be reputed to be good, must in some way or other be under the curse of providence, and their sufferings are the consequences of their own sins, or the sins of others. It was this earthly conception among the Jews which led them to think upon the kingdom of God as Davidic, as visible, unfitting them to apprehend the true Kingdom of Messiah, and thus to reject Christ. It is doubtful if the spirit in Christian Churches, and nations, differs greatly from that found among the Jews ; it is certain Christians ought to know better seeing that sacrifice and self-sacrifice, as the remedy for sin, sorrow, and suffering, lies at the root of the Christian religion, as so fitly symbolised in the Cross of Christ. Yet it ought to be remembered that the Jews passed through a special tuition, a very bitter experience in the years of captivity in Babylon, which might have

taught them that it is only through suffering and sacrifice, not for the sake of these, but because of sin, that men and nations are enabled to enter the kingdom of God. Indeed, the Jews did learn important lessons from their suffering and sorrow ; only it is said they have conceived the suffering Messiah of Isaiah, the prophet, to be the Jewish nation, and they have not been able to see that the Sufferer and Sacrifice is Christ the Messiah. The other conceptions are true also ; that the Jewish nation, the suffering individual Jew, and the suffering Christian, or any other sufferer, waiting upon God with a meek, patient, resigned, obedient spirit, is the companion with Christ in the sorrowful way, and thus consciously, or unconsciously, united with Christ, and a member of His kingdom of Grace and of heaven. To Christ this thought was a familiar one ; and, in His words, to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, He rebuked them for their foolishness, their sluggishness of thought, their want of belief and comprehension of their Scriptures, saying, " Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His Glory ? " And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. The past the present, and the future were all, in this matter clear to His vision ; and this also is a kingdom of God, and of heaven which scientific students of the Word should consider fully.

IX. In like manner the revelation of the Holy Spirit, as Divine Wisdom in creation ; as the Spirit of God ; as the Spirit in the prophets ; as the Spirit in Christ ; and, as the thrice Holy Spirit by Christ, links Pentecost with the past ages ; the Acts of the Apostles are the Acts of the Holy Spirit in men in the Church of Christ ; the letters of the Apostles are the fruits of the Spirit in the souls of those who believe ; and the letters to the Churches in Asia are the messages of the Spirit to all Churches and Christians throughout the world. It is the Voice of the Spirit that invites the thirsty, the hungry, the weary, the faint, yea, all who will, to come and drink freely of the river of the water of life. From the beginning to the end of Holy Scriptures, the Divine Agent is the Holy Spirit carrying out the development of the kingdom in all its manifold phases and revelations.

X., XI., XII. It is not necessary to enter into details as to these three divisions or realms of Truth ; the first is the spiritual psychic kingdom as conceived in men : it may be that of spiritual

experience and of empiricism ; but as can easily be seen, the vision is very much wider than that of the psychic realm in the development that is natural in its order. The second is a higher development for the simple reason that it is intellectual in its operations ; it is the effort to attain to divine spiritual truth ; and, as can be seen it synchronises with the natural intellect and with natural science. The third is the development into spiritual manhood ; for the knowledge of the truth in Christ will produce spiritual order, and the conception of law as reigning throughout the realm of Grace. This state is conceived as Life ; it transfigures the natural into the spiritual ; chaos and darkness are conditions of the past ; old things have passed away and all things have become new ; the new heaven and the new earth, the holy city, are conceived as having descended upon men from heaven with the Glory of God resting upon them ; the sea restless with the troubles of humanity has disappeared ; the sun and moon as reflecting lights of truth have disappeared ; the Glory of God lightens all things, and Christ, the Lamb, the Sacrifice, is the very light of the universe. Here no visible temple can be seen ; there is no curse and no sin, there is no night or darkness, for the Lord God, the Christ, is the Light, given to lighten all men ; and it is through the light derived from Him that manhood and dominion is given to men, and they shall live and reign with Him for ever and ever.

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## CHAPTER II.

### CREATION AND THE TEN GENERATIONS.

It is now a familiar truth that the physical universe is subject to Science ; in other words all that is physical can be so conditioned, related, and correlated in thought, that abstract systems of the sciences are set in order, and the final results are known as the physical laws. The same order of thought has been applied to the psychical world ; here the complexity is great, and the means of interpretation uncertain ; psychology and mental science do not unite and harmonise together ; and thus Science in this realm is working as in the grey dawn of the morning ; there have been results attained sufficient to encourage workers, but the sun has not risen and the light of day is not yet come. In the realm of the intellectual and moral sciences there is a similar condition of progress ; the intellect, by science, had begun to conceive the thought that with the lever resting upon the physical sciences as upon a firm, immovable, unchangeable rock, the future was certain, and that, in due time, science, as king in the realm of thought, would reign supreme over all realms. A change has come over this fair, ambitious vision ; the physical has given way, the lever has not found a stable foundation, and it is suspected, even suggested, that it is useless to expect firmness in what is ever changing, and stability in manifold forms of thought, even though these may be conceived as abiding order and law. Science is fully within its rights when it analyses to the very last relations the thoughts which deal with any realm of being ; it is useless to try to prevent such inquiry, or the attempt to resolve the thoughts of men into rational order and scientific law. The manifested weakness in what has been named science is not to be found in order and law, for this is its strength and glory ; it is when the intellect would go forth into a realm in which it has no power that the failure is seen ; then the sacred locks are

shorn, and Samson is weak like other men. In other words man is so constituted that he can reason upon the relations of abstract thoughts ; but when the Ultimate, the Reality, that lies behind all relations is met with, then the intellect fails, reasoning is at an end, and it is faith that believes that the Reality exists. As indicated there are several related ultimates which science finds in its onward pathway ; and some men who claim to represent science have been bold enough to attempt to break down what seems to be impassable barriers to the intellect ; in the name of science they say, " Be opened " ; they assume that the word was with power ; but they are so blind as not to be able to see that the doorways remain closed. Thus whilst thinking that they were building on a rock they were actually building upon shifting sands. These remarks refer specially to agnostic philosophers, not to true scientific thinkers, because as is well-known, science does not pretend to prove that it has discovered the mysterious link by which inorganic matter is changed into living organism ; it does not declare that the link betwixt nerve tissues and spirit perception is known ; and it does not assert that it has solved the mystery of that change which, from the psychic in the lower creatures, becomes intellectual abstract, moral, and religious thought in man. It would seem that the mystery which surrounds these problems is not only great ; it is being realised that in such abstract names as Force, Life, Spirit, Thought, Intellect, a Moral Nature, and Grace, there are the mysteries of Being, Reality ; and that when the intellect of man touches these abstract concepts, the limit of reasoning is at an end, and that further advance is not possible. At the root of existence there is Being ; Being becomes the Living ; the Living becomes the Spirit perceiving ; the Spirit perceiving finds a helpmeet in Thought, Mind, or Memory ; Thought or Mind becomes Intellect, and by the power of reason there is development in man to empiricism, scientific order, and law. The agnostic philosophy asserts that this is one monistic natural development without any break of continuity ; and science emphatically replies this is not proved ; it is not science that makes such assertions, it is the man who confesses that he does *not* know asserting that he *does* know and that science must confirm this unproved assertion. The true position for thinkers to take up is to accept all that science can prove, and that there is general agreement upon, but as related to Being it is enough

to confess that this fact is a truth that cannot be denied ; and it is a belief about which there ought not to be any discussion. As to the becoming or the development, from principles within each realm, the authority is science ; but as to the development from one principle into another, as from force to life, or life to spirit, this is not known by the intellect of man, and thus, even as a means of scientific order, it is very important to keep these ultimates, or related ultimates, of thought distinct. It is not asserted here that these principles do not develop into each other ; it is not denied that it is possible they are all one ; the conclusion is simply this—it appears that the intellect finds limitation, and that it does not possess power to discover, to know Being in its Reality or Essence.

When the power to know by the intellect, the reason, is thus limited, the question may well rise to the lips, Is this the true reason why in the past harmony of thought among men was not possible ? Men in East and West have ever conceived that the way of enlightenment, of knowledge of good and evil, of supremacy, of all that is desirable, could be found only by the reason, by the intellect. It is the perverted craze of mankind through all the ages ; it came from Babel, and beyond it, and the issues have ever been confusion. To know, to know truth, to know wisdom, this has been the pursuit of men ; they have been following this divine goddess who promised so much, so intently, that they have failed to hear the Divine whisper that being is before, and greater, than knowing ; and that living and doing are of far greater importance. The order of development is worthy of consideration ; man begins in being, living, seeing, thinking, and knowing, but all these culminate in doing ; and it is true thought and right action that marks the man in the image of God, as compared with the creature in the likeness of the cunning subtle serpent. It is in the light of this line of thought that the importance of history, as applied to the records of the actions of men and nations, can be seen. The historian enters the arena of men and their deeds ; it is assumed that he possesses knowledge such as will fit him for his work ; if he is devoid of experience, of empiric knowledge, of the thoughts of men and their laws, and he proceeds to relate events, and pass judgment upon the actors, would it be strange if he were hissed off the stage, and compelled to give up the seat of judgment ? The man might be a good story-teller, or a sycophant writing to please men, but not a historian such as men would

respect because of true knowledge and right judgment. True and right thinking historians, who judge wisely and righteously, may be conceived as inductive, scientific historians ; they deal with the details of a nation, or a period, as the means of gaining true knowledge, and the little bit of work thus performed is a golden link in the scientific chain of history. In thus looking at the work of the historian it can be seen that his work is analogous with that of the physical scientist ; he is assisting in gathering together that mass of knowledge which, in due time, and viewed from the right standpoint, will flash forth upon men true history, as it will be seen in the light of the method of Christ.

It may be observed here that history, as an inductive science, and as carried on by historians, cannot solve the many important problems which have occupied the thoughts of men during past ages. What men may expect is to find what knowledge men have possessed, and what their moral actions have been toward each other. It is true that along with the moral there will be found traces of the spiritual, as revealed in religion ; but the mass of history may be conceived as occurring in the moral sphere, in that of manhood, and of national and international life. As with the physical sciences so with the moral ; the light here is as darkness, and the darkness cannot understand, or interpret its own wide sphere of thought and action. Assuming that this is correct, the problem to be studied is not the inductive science of history but the science of history as advanced far enough to enable the student standing by the method of Christ, to perceive in the Light of Christ what the true meaning of history must be ; and to see and judge the actions of men as measured by Christ. In a sense this problem is a moral one as dealing with the actions of men ; but it may not be out of place to suggest that moral philosophers, and ethical students, are a long way behind in their studies ; their position is analogous with that of Socrates, Aristotle and others in Greek history, or of Cato and Seneca in Roman history. The meaning being that as these wise men were dealing with problems intellectual and moral, in the light of the stage of natural development, as suited to the stage of history to which they belonged, so the modern moral or ethical teachers, in a new age, and under spiritual conditions, are found rehearsing their formulas when they ought to be in the spiritual realm of Christ. But, in opposition to this thought, it may be asserted that the moral stage of manhood cannot change ; the aim of all moralists is to reach the beauti-



ful, the true, the good, and the righteous ; and until this end has been attained, the eyes of men must be kept fixed upon the moral standard of life, so that they may strive to reach it. Whilst this is true, and to be admitted to the full, as the ideal of the moralist, it must at the same time be remembered that the drag, or brake, of the moralist has not been powerful enough to prevent that development of a spiritual kind, which has taken place during the past 2,000 years. The truth being that Greece and Rome had their natural, intellectual, and moral opportunities and failed ; for the wisdom of Greece had been conceived as foolishness ; and the morality of Rome as immorality, hatred, and cruelty. There has been a renaissance of Greece, and a resurrection of Rome in imperialism, but they have been imitators of the past and not fit representatives of the present age. In the light of development this requires no elaborate explanation ; because Greece, Rome, and Judea failed in their spheres ; then came a crisis, a judgment, and an end of the past dispensation ; and upon the ruins of these, the Christian, the spiritual, was set up as a new order, and this has been the living tree in its development and growth upon the earth for 2,000 years. If this is a true conception of the facts then the intellectualists and moralists of the nineteenth century are like their brethren of more than 2,000 years ago, with this difference, that almost, if not altogether, unconsciously, they have been made by the Spirit of Christ the means by which there is a spiritual development in harmony with the kingdom of God. It is a fair question to ask, and agnostics, intellectualists, and ethical teachers may give the matter their consideration ; in what way the methods of thought are similar, or differ, in the two ages of the world's history ? If the methods of enquiry and study are naturalistic, and similar, will it not follow that the results would be similar ; that development would fail and that Europe would follow in the footsteps of Greece and Rome ? Is not this the result, to a large extent, in modern history ; apart from purely scientific work, has not education been upon Greek ideals ; government and social life upon Roman forms ; and religious services largely upon the Jewish temple, ritual, and synagogue ? The point here being that those who are in the midst of a new development do not comprehend the age to which they belong ; a new type has been formed by the Spirit of God, but in thought, word and action, they live in, and are formed by, a past type. The age that culminated in Greece, Rome and

Judea, had no conception that it was fulfilled in the Man Jesus Christ, the Son of God ; and it seems to be conclusive that those moved by similar aspirations in the Christian age, have entirely failed to understand this new Seed and the order of development that has taken place. This may prove to be an important lesson in the study of development ; because, it would appear that the form that is subject to development is not conscious of the fact ; and that the length of time for such a change, in this instance, is about 2,000 years. The inference here being that in Abraham one age was ended and a second age begun ; in Jesus Christ another age closed and the Christian age was introduced ; and now by the Spirit of Christ, through science, and other influences, the Christian dispensation to the Gentiles will end and a universal order be made manifest in the age that is dawning upon men.

If these thoughts receive careful consideration there will be little difficulty in seeing that the proposed method of looking at history, as conceived by the method of Christ, is not inductive in its order, or that of historians. The method to be followed is that of Christ as found in the Bible ; His standard and authority alone should be recognised ; and yet it ought to be remembered that slavish conformity to, or limitation by, any order of thought, is contrary to the ways of Christ. Where the Spirit of Christ reigns there is freedom of thought and liberty of the mind ; He is the Lord of history, of man and nations ; and thus He alone, by His Spirit, can give the required guidance and tuition for a work of this kind. For such a work it would be a hopeless task to seek for guidance in any sphere of thought beneath that of Holy Scripture ; in none of them is there sufficient light to provide guidance ; they all need to be guided ; to have light thrown upon them from Christ, by science and the Bible ; He is the Light of Truth in all that is physical, psychical, moral and spiritual ; and it is by His Spirit of Truth that men may hope to be guided into the way of truth, grace and righteousness.

In advancing to the contemplation of history from such a standpoint it is necessary to remember that the method of Christ has, in a former work, been applied to the physical and other sciences ; thus it is not the problem of creation, and the history of the rocks or of the lower creatures that is here considered. The first chapter of Genesis will be referred to from the historic, not the scientific, aspect, as a revelation to all men of the Creator, and of the method of Christ in creation, to discern, if possible,

whether there are grounds for belief that this first revelation in the Bible is the inheritance of mankind. It has already been assumed that man as moral required no special revelation ; the revelation that would come to him in his normal unfallen state would be by the development of his nature in knowledge of truth and righteousness ; and that this was available by the attainment of knowledge, and by conformity to truth, law, the Will of God. By the Fall there came a change, then a special revelation became necessary ; and this objective revelation became the means of instruction for men and their guide in the darkness amid the troubles of life. It is assumed that man as a reasoning being would ask questions ; and to that question of Whence ? there was given the revelation of the vision of creation. The reply to the question Whence ? is given again in the generations of the Heaven and Earth ; the reason being that in the problems of regeneration and restoration to the favour of God this is the theme of the Bible. It is this history that is the true history of mankind from the Bible standpoint ; in other words, the response to the question When ? is that of time, the manifestation of the Word of God, and that Word as Form is Christ. In this study the effort is made to get behind Form and Word, thus the response to the question Why ? leads the thinker to think upon man as desert, chaos, a ruin ; upon the God of mercy and love ; the gracious Seed, the Son ; the design, plan, purpose, of salvation ; and that order found in the Bible at last conceivable as a scientific realm of law. During the operations of the Spirit in the work of Redemption men remain ignorant of the sevenfold wisdom of the Spirit becoming throughout the ages Incarnate in Humanity ; but in the light of the method of Christ the immanence of the Spirit is revealed, and the glory of God is manifested to men. With the question What ? at this stage of thought there arises a double answer ; to the first, that is to Being, Essence, Reality, there is no attainable intellectual knowledge ; but, as to the revelation, it is Divine, the Word of God, the work of the Spirit, that which the Spirit has ordained and made manifest in time for the redemption, regeneration, and restoration of mankind. The question How ? reveals inquiring man, and it may be angels, because it is said that they also are interested in this great work of God. The manifold replies that men have received from the How ? may be summed up in the many theological and philosophical systems of thought that exist, or have existed ; because it cannot be said

that if men have failed to discover the order, the science of the Bible, it has been for want of trying. Men have sought it by the way of knowledge, of human wisdom, but the search has been in vain ; a veil as of thick darkness enwrapt the spiritual order, and thus only physical and psychical forms could be discerned. The question Who ? or for Whom ? was this revelation made has never been enshrouded in mystery. It is for fallen, sinful men, for all men, and all nations. Because when men of all nations—heathen, barbarian, Greek, Roman, and Jew—failed to reach moral manhood and salvation by the natural, then in the fulness of the times Christ came, but from Whence men knew not. The Spiritual became Incarnate in time and in human form as Man. Through and by Man the Spirit inwrought the spiritual into humanity ; men received the divine spiritual life ; they have studied the divine order ; the method of Christ through the Spirit is dawning upon men ; they will know to Whom the message of salvation came and Who brought it to this earth. This divine work has come in spiritual power ; by it men will attain to spiritual manhood, and the Whether will in due time be revealed to them.

The stage of thought, which men seek to attain, when applying the method of Christ to any realm is that of the spiritual ; visible signs, words are studied not as symbols only, but as holding within them spiritual truth. In looking at the story of creation as recorded in Genesis I. it is not to be conceived that the story is literal truth as expressed by the words ; neither is it to be supposed that physical science will be able to throw any light upon the order that is recorded. It would appear that the story might be studied profitably as the order of development in nature, and in grace ; and that possibly the key supplied in the creation story may be found useful in the study of the Bible as a whole. The thought suggested here is that the student will do well to think upon this record, as a biologist would think upon and study the development of a germ ; his eyes may be intently watching the ever changing form of the living thing, but his intellect is working upon words, as signs ; upon an order of development ; and upon laws which are divine truths inwrought into nature. The biologist may be conceived as musing upon types of creatures that have existed, and thus from time to time, speaking to himself, or to others, he would think upon, and talk about, the changes in the types taking place in the development of the organic structures.

As with the biologist so with the spiritual student ; to him the germs in creation, as days and events, are not things natural, they possess spiritual life, and thus germ and sign are only the invitation to a progressive study in spiritual things all following the same spiritual order. The story is suitable for children, or for childlike people ; it is useful for the inquirer, the man who longs to know about order and law ; but in the light of the method of Christ it is order and law. The words and days are living, and they will not permit living men to rest until life and life find their correspondencies. In the light of the method of Christ there is revealed as the first day, God as Creator ; and the signs to be studied are heaven and earth, formless chaos and darkness, spirit motion, light, light and darkness, and day and night. There is no difficulty in finding in these words (1) God the Eternal mystery of Heaven and earth ; (2) the chaos and darkness of a world, a universe, a man, without form, order, or law ; (3) the work of the Spirit ; (4) that work conceived as light ; (5) man and the intellect, with its operations upon thoughts, light and darkness ; (6) And, in day and night, the moral man as measurer of time by law. As can be seen, the principle or law of development is fitly expressed in this first day or period of creation ; it is in fact the living germ of nature, man, and the Bible, and all that follows is growth, the expansion, or the elaboration of what is suggested in the germ. It is not to be considered as something unusual this inception in the germ of all God's works in the first day, period, or cycle ; this is repeated in many forms in the Bible, and it is an important thought to be kept in view in the study of God's word and works. As examples of this truth it is only necessary to think upon the Book of Genesis, as the germ of recreation in the womb of time, containing all that will be developed in history ; and the Beatitudes uttered by Christ, which contain in their germ concepts, all the redemption truths contained in the Bible. It is this amazing, living, sevenfold wisdom, contained in all God's works, that is so very wonderful for the student ; the Bible is not dead, it is quick to the very core, and the order of development it contains is the living proof that it is the very word of God to man.

The second day of creation may require study ; the word firmament is a peculiar one, and it may be difficult to find a spiritual analogue for the concept. The vision is a return in thought to the formless chaos, darkness, and the deep : there is no division : it is the thick darkness of the waters that cannot be described ; the

One Reality into which the intellect of man cannot pierce. The thought that arises here is that of permanence, firmness, stability ; the vague indescribable waters are divided ; the one is changed into two, and in the midst there is made manifest to the spiritual vision, the Christ, the Heaven, the Name above every name, the Firstborn Son of God.

The third day of creation is occupied with the waters ; the formless chaos under heaven, the division into earth and seas ; and the development in that which has been raised above the chaos, and thus grass, herb, seed, fruit trees, and seed, all after their kind, with their seed in their own structures ; this also is the work of God and it is good. This vision is expressed in the first day in the words, " The Spirit of God moved," it is the revelation of the Spirit in purpose, design, order, and law.

The fourth day in creation returns in thought to the firmament and heaven, and thus to Christ, the Archetype of all created beings. This vision, as related to man psychic, and to the universe, is very comprehensive, and on referring back to the first day it is summed up in one word, Light. What is this light but the Light that lighteneth the universe and man ; only through the Spirit there is dispersion and refraction ; what was in the Spirit is now made manifest in the universe, and in the soul of man. The two great lights naturally are the sun and moon ; but the great lights here are the moral nature and the intellect : it is the latter that rules in the night ; when the day is come then the reign will be by that moral law that receives and swallows up all other lights. The Light has now become the light of the universe and the true light in the soul of man ; the vision is great, very wonderful, and yet, even as the reflected sun is seen in the dew-drops, so the Sun of righteousness is reflected and seen, or will be, in the soul of every redeemed man.

The fifth day of creation returns in spirit to the waters with their chaotic conditions, and to the firmament in which there is light, to the light and darkness of the first day. This is the intellectual vision of man in its fulness as expressed in living creatures in air, earth, and sea. All live in Christ and in the Light of His truth ; even to man they are not dead things, for the intellect abolishes darkness and death ; and life eternal and thoughts immortal reach the vision to be blessed abundantly in all fruitfulness of increase.

The sixth day of creation, it will be observed, differs from the

other days in this that it is a double work, first by the manifestation of living creatures, cattle, creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind and order ; and second, the creation of man in the image of God with dominion over all creatures, and with the rich endowment of all things and creatures as his possession. Referring back to the first day, it will be found that "God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." The words used here may require study in this sense that the Day is the creation of the sun, the Night that of darkness, starlight, or moonlight ; and the latter is conceived to be the reflected glory of the sun. There is, however, another matter worthy of consideration as to evening and morning, because the thought actually arises that in this record of creation it is all night and the vision of each night vanishes at the break of day. In the margin the reading is, "and evening was and morning was" ; there is no day and the work is resumed from evening to morning. There is an important truth here, and it takes this form ; living creatures of sky and sea are created in the night of the fifth day ; on the night of the sixth day the earth brings forth her living creatures, and as the morning breaks, man appears upon the scene in the image of God. This double act of creation appears strange, but it may be expressed in this order of thought. The intellect of man can soar like the bird in the sky, and it can go down into the depths of nature, but in its soaring and searching it is, in a sense, an irresponsible power ; it may soar high and descend into the very depths, but, as an intellectual power it entirely fails to reach either Heaven or Hell. It cannot find rest in God and it cannot comprehend the restlessness of the awful depths that are in spiritual thoughts. It is written "truth shall spring out of the earth ; and righteousness shall look down from Heaven" ; in other words, in the moral nature of man there is required what comes out of the earth—that is, truth in all its relations, and it is thus that truth, science, order, law, becomes moral, and the day is crowned at its dawning by man created in the image of God. It may be well to remember that this inclusion of two powers within the moral nature of man is not unusual in the Bible ; a threefold inception may be traced in the sons of Noan and in the sons of Terah. The intellect, moral nature, and grace co-exist in the same soul ; and it is in the moral nature that the struggle betwixt good and evil, light and darkness, takes place.

The seventh day is conceived as the state of rest ; the natural creation has been manifested ; man has seen it ; and he is the epitome of all that has been created ; therefore his place is to rest in God and patiently wait for the fulness of the blessing and the sanctification it contains.

With such thoughts as these the old old story of creation may be perused with interest ; in the light of the method of Christ it is radiant with truth, and more truly living in spiritual power than it has ever been in the history of mankind. To read the story as a verbal literal record is right for children ; to find in it proof of the glory, power, and wisdom of God is right for men ; to search deeply into its meaning is worthy of scientific students ; but what men require is to find that it reveals Christ, and that by His method of thought the light becomes radiant, glowing with the brightness of the Day and the rising Sun of righteousness. As a means of indicating in what sense there is living likeness, analogy, betwixt the story of creation and the Beatitudes uttered by Christ and that they are complementary, the following thoughts may be found useful :—1. Blessed is the state of the man that is poor in spirit ; he has emerged out of the chaos of evil, darkness, strife ; the Spirit has moved him into the light ; there is still light and darkness, day and night, in the soul, but he possesses in germ the kingdom of Heaven. 2. Blessed is the state of the mourner ; he has been separated from sin, the world, and its ways, and his comfort is found in Christ, the Heavenly One. 3. Blessed is the state of the meek man ; in him the chaos of the waters of death are separated from the work of the Spirit ; he is not possessed by the earthly, but the earthly is subdued, and thus the earth is being inherited as the gift of the Spirit. 4. Blessed is the state of the man that hungers for what is true and righteous ; sunlight, moonlight, and starlight are all given to him ; they radiate upon him from the Bible, nature, and his own soul ; truth is bread, and righteousness is life, and those who hunger and eat “shall be filled.” 5. Blessed is the state of the man that is full of mercy and pity ; what is this but to burst the bonds of family, kin and nation, to be like the heavenly Father, kind to all, and like the Son of the Father full of forgiveness to the greatest offenders ; “they shall obtain mercy.” 6. Blessed is the state of the man that has a pure heart, in whom there is no duplicity or sin ; when he awakens in the dawn of the morning, it will be in the light of the rising sun, and the face that will be seen will



be that of Christ, the Son of God. Thus far the days of creation and the analogous Blessings ; it is what ought to be expected that the Blessings will extend beyond the creation ; and thus Blessing 7 is Christ the peacemaker, and all who follow him truly are " called the children of God " ; and Blessing 8 is Christ, the Persecuted, the Sufferer, the Sacrifice for Sin, and those who follow Him in the way of sorrow theirs is the inheritance known as " the kingdom of Heaven."

#### THE GENERATIONS OF THE HEAVENS AND OF THE EARTH.—

1. In that beginning, beyond the ken of man, these were created, they live, and they are the first of the generations of God. Creation is represented as the volition of the Will of God ; and at the highest, the creation of man is as a complex work of the Divine Spirit to produce what is Divine. The Divine is conceived as looking around for the divine man ; he is not to be found, and in his place there are negations ; no plants or herbs even, for life is gone ; there is no rain and the earth is desert. In the mist that is impenetrable to human vision, there came dew, the living water ; the dust took form, the breath of Heaven came, and there was life, spiritual life, a living soul. Heaven had kissed the dead earth, and Heaven had given a new life to the earth. 2. There is a Divine garden away eastward whence the sun will arise ; it is the home of man ; it may be a place on earth, a place in heaven, or the soul of man ; but it is very beautiful and pleasant, and the fruit that grows there is good to eat, for it conveys knowledge and nourishes life ; it is well watered by the river of God, and men have failed to conceive the wonderful treasures which this garden, with the river and its four divisions contains and conveys to them. 3. This garden is man's possession, it is entrusted to him ; it is his dominion, with the fullest freedom and liberty of thought, word, and action ; but there is limitation ; the Lord, the Owner of the garden has, for good reasons, reserved the fruit of one tree for a season ; it is fruit that children cannot digest ; and yet it may become angels' food and the food of man when manhood is attained, and the sweet reasonableness of Divine limitation can be understood. It is good for children to enjoy the sunshine, to eat the fruit and play their innocent games ; it is bad to wish for what is set apart, reserved ; to sulk and allow the cloud to gather and cover the face of the sun ; all this tends to darkness and evil, it is not right. (4) The garden is very beautiful to look upon, and all the senses of man are blessed in the

enjoyment of what is possessed ; but man requires a helpmeet ; the spirit seeks for a soul where it may be at home ; and it is in this mysterious psychic world where love dwells ; where there is sweet fellowship and communion ; where sense forms change into images and thoughts ; it is here that in sweet friendship thoughts become words ; language becomes divine utterances ; and the man, as divine, rises to great concepts, and with Godlike power utters names and words that fit into, reflect, and express, what is spiritual divine truth. This is the divine mystic union which surpasses the conceptions of men ; it is here, let men think upon the truth and veil their faces, that the Holy Spirit becomes bone of man's bone ; or man becomes flesh of the Spirit's flesh ; or Christ is incarnate in man by the Spirit ; here father and mother are left far behind ; Christ and man are one flesh, one spirit, one soul ; separation is impossible, and this is a wonderful, true real, spiritual union in the Divine Love of Christ. (5) This garden is heaven ; this heaven is a possible vision of the soul ; it existed, and it was pleasant and beautiful beyond human thought. Whence this divine vision ? Even out of that mist that cannot be pierced by the keenest vision. When did the vision arise ? In time, when the man is seen in the garden so beautiful and pleasant. Why was the vision given ? Even that men may know that they possess such an inheritance and keep it carefully, remembering that with freedom there is limitation ; and that to transgress in spiritual law is spiritual death ; because this is rupture of spirit from Spirit ; the parting of the creature from the Creator ; the loss of the divine image, darkness, and thus night and death. What is this vision of the man in the garden, the helpmeet, human language, authority, truth and purity, so that there is no nakedness or sense of shame ? This is man's normal natural condition ; in a real and true sense he is a god because he is in the divine image ; he was innocent and happy in the garden, and knew it not ; the way to the open heavens was before him, and yet strange to say, the limitation of law was not accepted with a loyal and joyful spirit. How could man act this foolish part of being impatient under one little restraint, of putting aside duty and obedience, the imperative ought engraven in his own soul ? It is a great mystery ; there was no necessity to take such a step, but how it all took place is recorded in the story of temptation by the serpent ; the eating of the fruit and the consequences. This is how the event took place as it may be viewed from the standpoint of

development; the woman represents the psychic nature in its innocence, the serpent the subtle intellect, and the garden the soul; this subtle creature of divine origin compares and reasons; it suggests doubts that any limitation exists, and from this proceeds to contradict the Word of God, by saying that death will not follow disobedience, but rather that disobedience will bring opened eyes, the knowledge of good and evil, and elevation from experience into that of being divine as the gods. The curious thing about the story is not the cunning subtlety of the serpent, and the doubt and denial of the Word of God, but the folly of the woman in even listening to such thoughts or words. The serpent promises nothing that is not already, in the germ, possessed by man; it is the premature attempt to grasp something that would, in due time, become realised fact, and the stretching forth of the hand to seize the fruit before it is fully ripe that is conceived. The intellect must seek to open the eyes and give a wider vision of truth; it is by the intellect that the divine in man is discerned; in all this the serpent utters what is true; the sin lies in the incitement to want of faith, unbelief and denial of God's Word; it is the serpent as against God, unbelief as against faith; and this is not limited to Eden, it extends to all nations and to all men. On the one hand, there lies limitation, duty and obedience; the patient waiting for instruction and development in truth and righteousness; on the other, the apparent good things; what is beautiful and pleasant, what is desirable for wisdom; it is a matter of choice, and with the choice made there must follow the consequences. It is freewill and duty, or freewill and pleasure; let men reason as they may, this is the inevitable end that is reached; except that utterly foolish, contemptible reasoning that jumps to the conclusion that man is a mere machine without liberty or freedom of will. Man by the wise choice takes the pathway to Heaven and to the company of the Divine in God; by the foolish choice, the pathway is downward and the end is toward death, the devil, and evil. This is conceivable in terms of scientific order and law; this is not a truth limited to Eden; somehow it comes very near to every thoughtful man and woman; they know that they are free to choose, and that the issues of life rest upon the wise or foolish choice that is made. It may well be that science, in studying the How? of this complex problem will not reach any other result; it is a problem of limitation and of freedom of the will; in these it begins and ends; the facts are there and men know

that they are true. 6. Who are they who know it to be true? Even those who have sinned, because with sin comes the opening of the eyes, nakedness, shame, disgrace, false pretences, hiding and fear. Is it necessary to prove this and to show in what way man is self-condemned in the presence of God and law? Instead of the innocent child there is now a fugitive and a criminal, thus the thought of God is a dread, and the judgment seat of God is a terror. Excuses are useless when the conscience is awakened to the state of guilt; the state of blessing is changed into that of fear; cursing is inherited, and thus blame, strife, ill-will, and hatred reign; there is darkness, evil, and death; the eyes are opened in very deed, but it is to know evil, to see suffering, to experience sorrow, and all these things are the fruits of that tree which signifies limitation. Everything is lost and nothing gained; the serpent has tricked man into believing that limitation could be broken down by the godlike intellect; the intellect has followed the serpent and tried to destroy limitation, and the issue of it all is found in the fact that the serpent is found to be a liar, even from the beginning. The knowledge of good and evil is not to be desired, as compared with knowledge of what is true, good, and right in God's sight; these are of real value and they lead men to the centre of the garden of God and to the Tree of Life. 7. Whence the power to recover man from this fallen state? This is the continuation of the story of man; of Eden and the Fall; the serpent and the Seed of Grace are now met in deadly struggle for the possession and subjection of mankind; and the result of this struggle is expressed in the mystic signs of a cursed serpent with a bruised head; and a seed of a woman with a bruised heel. What would have been so easy, simple, and pleasant in the state of innocence is made very difficult, painful, and sorrowful under new conditions; the blessed state, the garden with all its pleasures, the flowers, and the fruits vanish out of sight; the curse follows man; the earth is under the same curse, thorns and thistles strive for the mastery with the corn in the fields; and the end is dust to dust, for the awful warning has been fulfilled and death reigns over that which man thought to be so beautiful, desirable, and promised to convey to man divine wisdom. 8. Adam, the moral man, is dead; Eve lives, for she is the mother of the living seed; there has been sacrifice, propitiation, a new beginning; a new road must now be taken to reach the Tree of Life, for there is no return to life by Adam, by the

knowledge of good and evil; thus the way of life by moral law is closed up for ever. The flaming swords of truth and justice bar the way to Life, and until the mystery of good and evil has been settled; the conflict betwixt the serpent and the Seed finished; man must till the ground and labour to live. He has made the fatal choice to seek good and evil, to know God and the devil, to find light through the darkness of night, and these things lie at the root of the story of man's redemption from the paths of evil, his regeneration, and his restoration to the favour of God.

9. This is the beginning of the story of redemption as conceived in the generations of Heaven and Earth. The vision is the earth under the curse; Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, sacrifices and offerings unto God; rejection and acceptance; faith and ungrateful unbelief; jealousy, hatred, and the murder of a brother by a brother. The seed of the serpent has conceived and the issue is hatred and murder; the seed of the woman has lived and the end is an act well pleasing to God and a true sacrifice; the Dead is not dead, He has been changed into the Word, and the Word liveth, speaketh, and dieth not.

10. The seed of Life seems to be dead, but it liveth; the seed of the serpent seems to live and it is dead. Poor wretched Cain, where can he go and what can he do? The remembrance of murder blackens his soul; the voice of blood cannot be shut out of his ears; the fugitive and vagabond can find no home, no place of rest; no man lays a hand upon him, and yet his punishment is intolerable; this life is more than man can endure. There is mercy and pity with God even for the murderer; the mark of God protects the evil-doer; but the man cannot forget the past, or forgive himself. There is a doom of darkness upon all such men; they are unable to live with those who honour, worship, and serve God; they are wanderers in the earth, the unhappy dwellers in busy noisy cities.

11. The record of the history of the family of Cain is to be traced in the names of his descendants in their generations; and in their names the story of the development in evil ways may be traced; the sixth from Cain, the man with the Cain spirit in its manhood, is found in Lamech, the bigamist and murderer; he has reached even to this pinnacle of earthly glory, he can recite his own evil deeds in poetry and boast of that vengeance which will fall upon those men who will seek to avenge themselves upon Lamech. A wonderful man and the father of interesting sons; are they not the fathers of civilisation; of those who dwell in tents and possess

cattle ; of those who play sweet music upon harp and organ ; and who are the keen learned artificers in iron and brass ? This is the glory of the earthly generations—wealth, pleasure, power, and supremacy ; the vision of heaven seems to be lost, and men find themselves listening to the accursed Lamech, the boaster who has in some mysterious manner come to believe that he is a very great man, because he is a murderer, the husband of more than one wife, and the father of such sons. 12. But this is not the end of the generations of Heaven and Earth. In a mysterious way Adam, Eve, Seth, the seed instead of Abel, comes upon the scene. The seed of Cain knew not that the seed in Abel lived in Seth ; the serpent seed might flourish for a time, but the end shall be that this seed shall die, be cut off for ever ; the return will be to Seth and Enos, to those who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Saviour and Sacrifice for mankind.

THE GENERATIONS OF ADAM.—It has been suggested that the creation story, as enlightened by the method of Christ, becomes radiant with new meaning ; and that when the Beatitudes and the creation story shine upon each other they reveal the fact that these creations in thought, although so different in appearance, contain the same musical rhythms ; the same solar spectrum of light ; and that they are the work of the same Spirit of Truth. The generations of Heaven and Earth are very complex and difficult to apprehend ; they coincide with the first day of creation, and yet, even by following the method of Christ, it has to be confessed that the way is without definite form ; there is darkness and a mist that cannot be dispelled ; there is spirit motion in man, the garden and law ; there is a glimpse of light in the psychic darkness, as if Christ had suddenly appeared in the midst ; there is darkness and light in the temptation and fall ; and night and the dawn of a new day for the sons of Cain. What is made plain is the great truth that in the family of Cain there arises no seed of Life, no Saviour from sin ; the race is earthly ; its possession is the earth, and there are no traces of divine aspirations toward the heavenly. Still Heaven and Earth are in the story, and thus the vision must not be limited by man ; it may cover ages ; it is a living vision ; it is many sided ; and thus no one can tell in what form it will appear and reappear before men ; it has all the interest that surrounds the solar spectrum ; it is not possible to measure the height and depth of the vision ; or to foretell what the re-refracted lines of spiritual truth will reveal to men.

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In the generations of Adam, it may be that the story is more simple and straightforward ; and if the key is to be found in the method of Christ, in creation, and in the second blessing, then the thoughts will be centred upon the man, the man that reveals Heaven ; and the man that gives comfort to all mourners on the way to Heaven. This Man, as revealed in the Word, is a creation of God in His likeness ; they are blessed as male and female, for the mystery of life and of redemption is developed through mankind. In these generations, the method of Christ may be traced in the names of the patriarchs descended from Adam ; every name is a man, and every man is a type, or a sign, of spiritual thoughts in the kingdom of God. The name and the man find their place in the days of the patriarchs, but it is conceivable that these men are living types of men, and of events in the history of the world. The generations as they succeed each other in Genesis may follow in a historic sequence ; but what seems to be the great truth in connection with each of the generations is this, they have a link of union with the past ; they live on and on through the ages ; and thus it may be a truth to be taken notice of that these generations co-exist, and that they are living and moving onward to events not yet accomplished. If this thought is remembered it will not seem so very strange if the idea is conceived that the generations of Adam, as mentioned in Genesis, are still alive upon the earth.

The thought that Adam is the son of God is stated in the genealogy in the Gospel of Luke, and the sense in which this truth can be accepted has been explained. The seed is not thought of as a physical body ; it is a spiritual truth, the truth that in the seed of Adam the Saviour would be found ; and in that seed the power of evil would be crushed. It is the spiritual seed that is traced in the spiritual word, and thus forms and names are useful, in so far as they can convey the spiritual facts. The familiar fact that Christ is the life of Adam, and the life in Adam, does not require further explanation ; it is the life in Adam that is the theme in these generations ; and He is the Man to be sought for and found. Adam, Cain, and Abel are typical men ; Cain is the natural son and the earthly heir ; Abel is the second son, the faithful and true, the sacrifice. Thus Abel represents Christ in this earliest stage of history as the Lamb of God, the Sacrifice for sin. The generations begin (1) Adam, the earthly is endowed with the seed of grace. (2) Seth, is the appointed one who takes his brother's place ; he is the living one in the place of the dead. (3) Enos is a fallen

sinful man ; and as touched by the Spirit of God, he calls on God and joins with others in spiritual worship. (4) Cainan is the possessor of the land, the grace of the Spirit is in him, thus the thought of truth and righteousness as a possession. (5) Mahalaleel means the praise of God, and the name of renown. (6) Jared means ruler and descent, manhood, the moral upright man. (7) Enoch, the dedicated, the man who walked with God ; who was not ; and who was with God. He is the type of the Living One, the man, the bringer of peace to the earth. (8) Methuselah, this name suggests a man with a dart ; or that at his death an end will come. (9) Lamech means powerful, spiritual power. (10) Noah, with him comfort, peace, rest. (11) The vision is that of the mixture of races ; the sons of God marrying the daughters of men ; and great wickedness, as carried on by mighty renowned men. (12) The doom upon the two races of Cain and Seth because of their wickedness ; but Noah finds grace in the Lord's eyes, for he is a just man walking uprightly before God.

The suggestion has been made that these names point to definite stages in history ; that they are in a sense the germ thoughts of history ; and in following the method of Christ, they point to men described by their names, (1) Abel is succeeded by (2) Seth ; the dead and the living are one, they represent Him who died for men Who liveth for ever in Heaven. (3) Enos the spiritual worshipper, may represent Noah, the spiritual man that survives the flood, the father of the historic nations. (4) Cainan may represent Abraham, the father of the faithful, to whom the land of Canaan was promised for an inheritance. (5) Mahalaleel may represent Moses, that man of renown whose life was one hymn of praise of God. (6) Jared points to David the ruler of Israel, in whose line of descent will be found the Christ. (7) Enoch points direct to the Christ, the dedicated One, Who brings life and salvation to men. (8) Methuselah, here the type points to Christ as sacrifice, and of the end of the age at his death. (9) Lamech may represent the coming of the Spirit in power. (10) Noah the new spiritual dispensation that will bring comfort, peace and rest to men. (11) Away beyond these there may be discerned the mighty men of renown ; the limitation of the years ; the work of the Spirit, and the great efforts of men. (12) A doom, or judgment upon men at the end of the age of a great spiritual revelation, when men seem to forget or reject God ; dishonour His Word, and thus bring upon themselves the judgments of God. It is not necessary to discuss



the question whether these analogies have been, as fulfilled, living developments of living spiritual truths ; in past times the conception would have been that of types and their fulfilment or the inorganic order of conception ; now the trend of thought is to living organic development, and this seems to express more fully all developments in history.

THE GENERATIONS OF NOAH.—It has been conceived that the creation story is a spiritual revelation ; that the true interpretation is not to be found in the natural story, nor in processes of reasoning upon the story ; but in the somewhat mystical method of finding the key to the story in Christ and in his method of thought. As suggested, the generations of Heaven and Earth have likenesses, similarities, and correspondencies with the first day of creation ; there is development as from a germ into a developed form of outward signs ; they agree in spirit, and they harmonise in their order. There is development in both, and it is felt that future developments are required to bring out the meanings that are involved in germ and in outward forms. In the generations of Adam there is found as in creation, second day, a similar development through waters and firmament to place or Being, and in the light of the method of Christ, Heaven is the archetypal form of the Son of God, the Man who came down from Heaven, who was in Heaven, and who possesses Heaven in His Being. This Man is made manifest as becoming man, He is man in Enoch. He brings peace, rest, and comfort to man in a new purified world in Noah ; and in the descendants of Seth He brings about the new conditions of true worship, prayer, and praise. Men are regenerate and renewed in Enoch ; they are restored in Noah, and thus Heaven has absorbed Earth ; there is no longer any sea of chaos, and men being in Heaven they are Heavenly. Such thoughts are involved in names, words, signs ; the Spirit radiates from them the glory of Christ, they live and they glorify God.

When looking upon the generations of Noah, following in order the method of Christ and of creation ; it is the third day that is the symbol form ; and it is the Holy Spirit and His work that is the theme for study. The vision of the third day is that of waters under Heaven ; the assuaging and separation of waters : the appearance of the earth ; and the fruitfulness of the earth in grass, herb, and tree, after their kind. The vision of the Flood is similar ; the waters of unrestful, troublous men cover the earth ;

the Spirit intervenes ; there are seas in their chaotic, inorganic masses ; there is the new earth above the waters ; and in the earth, and by it, there is organic development ; the Spirit moves, and there follows organic spiritual order. This vision presents itself as in succession to the generations of Adam, and it is easier to ask what the vision means than to get a satisfactory answer. Is the Flood a historic fact ? or is it a tradition that has survived the many migrations of the sons of men since their dispersion ? Was there a real Flood in the days of Noah as the basis of the fact that underlies the story ; and is that made the means by which a revelation and a tradition exists among men ? Who can tell ; the story is prehistoric, and even the Babylon legend, it must be confessed, does not seem to definitely settle this problem. When still older libraries than those of Babylon are discovered further light may be thrown upon this subject ; in the meantime and in the light of the method of Christ, the interest is not so much in the story of the Flood as in what it represents, and what it is meant to teach men. The period has now come in history, when visible signs and living organic forms are dissolving in the presence of men ; it is not a flood, but fire that surrounds them ; they are left as bodiless in the universe of thought, and what requires saving now is spirits and souls, for the imperishable cannot be destroyed by flood or fire. It may seem strange to express the vision of the present in such a form as this, and yet the vision is true in a way men may not as yet be able to discern.

The generations of Heaven and Earth respond to the question Whence ? In other words, the seer in spirit looks into the vast expanse of heaven, and it is one without form, apparently empty ; nothing can be seen, the universe is formless. The seer must wait and watch events ; there is development in the darkness of the immense depths, but the eye cannot see the Divine Form ; the Spirit has moved in the depths, and the revelation is Light ; there is a further movement traceable, there is division, and the development is light and darkness ; a further development, the light is Day, and the darkness is Night. This is a spiritual vision that surrounds all visions ; it embraces the universe and man. What name can man give to this vision within which he lives, moves, and has his being ? The generations of Adam respond to the question When ? By day and night came time, firmament, waters, form, Heaven ; yet by the organic eye the Form cannot be

seen, it is invisible and spiritual. In the records of time the invisible becomes organic life, and the life is within organic forms ; it is in men and in a Man. The second vision is included in the first ; it is the mystery of time and life, Man and mankind. The generations of Noah respond to the question Why ? The vision is floods, waters, earth, order, herbs, grass, trees, seed, and every kind after their kind. This vision is as a vision of the spirit ; as related to man it is psychic ; the spirit is perceptive, and what is perceived is in space and time, in light and dark, in day and night, in numbers and dimensions ; it is a great purpose and design, and the work is that of the salvation of mankind from destruction. At this stage of human thought, of development, is it to be supposed that the seer can see and understand what he perceives ? Psychologically he is only a perceptive child, how then can he compare that which he sees with something else unseen ; or how can he reason about what he does not comprehend ? Is not this something like the vision of the Flood ? It is not only pre-historic, it is mysterious and mystic ; it is spiritual and the work of the Spirit. It has been photographed by light into the souls of men and of history ; but the development of the dark image has not taken place ; this can only be done in the light of the method of Christ. Humanly speaking, it is from this psychologic standpoint that the generations of Noah require to be studied ; it is a strange study linked as it is with man and mankind ; a different realm of thought ; a later development, and yet co-extensive and coincident with the race of man.

It is conceived that the vision of the Flood is perceptive, and not consciously conceptive ; it is spiritually true and real, but it is not within the range of the intellect of man. It is linked with Adam by Noah, and the earthly, the physical, is becoming psychic and spiritual. (1) The man seen in the vision is a perfect, true, just man ; even a man who is said to walk with God as a companion. This man has three sons. Do they represent the intellect, the moral nature, and the spiritual power of grace in man and mankind ? Is there here a brief, concise concept of the spiritual powers in man as in line with the concepts in the Spirit ? If so, then they alone are represented as receptive of the light of Divine life and truth and the whole world being dia-magnetic to the Spirit, they are in the darkness ; they are corrupt, without spiritual life, violence reigns, and thus the end is destruction. 2 It is destruction that is the doom of the violent and the lawless ;

their works all tend to chaos. What then is the purpose of salvation? It is compared to an Ark, built by the redeemed, who receive the invitation to enter therein and be saved. In the vision there are two unseen powers, one that moves men to death, and another that influences for life; these powers enter into covenants with those who side with them; the one by the Ark is that of Life; the other is by the way of violence to death, the grave and hell. The Spirit gives the numbers and the dimensions of this Ark, and the mystery of its length, breadth, and height, but this is a subject for the spiritual mathematician to study. 3. The invitation to enter the Ark is spiritual and from the Spirit; it is for all, clean and unclean; the invitation is for preparation; it is for a limited time; and it is for mankind. 4. There is no hurry, no fear, no danger in entering into possession of the recognised means of salvation; all is done in perfect order; the light of life shines upon those who seek life, and the shadow of the darkness of death rests upon those who despise, or reject, the means of salvation. There is an end to the period of preparation; and the issues are life and death. 5. There is no uncertainty about this event; year, month, and day are named; the spiritual have entered the Ark and they are safe; the carnal and earthly are outside and they are lost; the floods have come, the waters rise; the fountains of the deep are broken up, and the Ark rides triumphant in perfect safety. For a definite period the rain falls and the waters rise; there is life in the Ark, but over all that is earthly and carnal death reigns. 6. It is during this sixth stage that the waters prevail and are at their height over the earth; the works of God seem to be destroyed; the proud waters of evil have it all their own way; and only, in the Ark, that little speck upon the horizon of a great sea, is life to be found. 7. Another mystic stage in the history of mankind in this day of grace has passed by; the floods of evil abate; the earth is again seen and felt; a new era has come, and new conditions have arisen. The purged earth is to be repossessed, and the harbingers of the new era are the raven with its croaking voice and black form, and the dove of peace. The raven can find a resting-place amidst the waters, but the dove returns to the Ark of Safety. (8) It was in a new age, under new conditions, that the earth was repossessed by man; the altar of sacrifice was raised; and the earth was consecrated by an accepted sacrifice. (9) There is a time of blessing, of dominion and possession, of obedience to law, of reverence

for life, truth, and righteousness, duty and responsibility; kinship and friendship are recognised; hatred and murder are banished into the darkness of the past; man has recovered the divine form and he is found once more in the image of God. (10) All these blessings come from God to men by His gracious Spirit; they are not yea and nay, matters that may be doubted; they are in the Covenant of Grace in Christ; the rainbow is the beautiful symbol of God's truth and faithfulness; this is "the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." (11) The subsequent story of Noah, the vineyard, the wine and drunkenness, nakedness and shame, and the behaviour of the three sons, are they not the mystic subjects of history? Why has this story been preserved? Has it anything to do with the state of mankind during past ages? Is it a link between the mystic vision of the flood in what is prehistoric as a vision of the Spirit and the workings of the thoughts of men during a period of history? Is it an intellectual mystic vision of mankind and of special families and their destinies? Is it the vision of a man, or is it psychological truth teaching men that Ham represents the intellect, Shem the moral nature of man, and Japheth that spiritual development which is progressing in the earth through the supremacy of the Aryan races? This is the peculiarity of all these studies, they are a revelation to men from God by the Spirit; they fit into the order of nature; and they synchronise with the being of man; but it must never be forgotten that Christ is the Light that gives light to men, and that it is light that makes the truth manifest to men. (12) "Noah lived after the flood," even so; the vision is not yet fulfilled in all its fulness; the earth waits for the promised comfort, the reign of peace and the Sabbath of rest. These are the mystic visions of God, the revelations of the Spirit, and the method of Christ; there is a promise, a coming, a realisation of the truth, but what the end will be for the comforted and the peaceful in the Sabbath of rest, who can tell?

**THE GENERATIONS OF THE SONS OF NOAH.**—It has been suggested for consideration that the days of creation synchronise with the generations in the order of their development; and up to the third day and the third generation it has been seen that likeness, similarity, or harmony can be traced. It has been stated that according to the method of Christ the order of development is not a continuous forward history; but rather that

each stage or generation becomes in a sense incorporated into what has been already revealed, and thus the strange study of cycles within cycles of thought ; and at the same time a development that is coincident and coexistent. There is a past, present, and future, and yet it is not easy to perceive the relative positions in the order of development. The continuous historical development is one, and it may be studied as by Biblical chronology ; the real development is very complex, and thus difficult to trace where new orders of thought arise, and the new additions fit in with the past and with the general order of development. It is a concept to be noted in the creation series that light is created in the first day, but it is after the movements of the Spirit ; and it is on the fourth day that lights are created to enlighten the earth and man ; thus the fourth in the first day is fulfilled in the fourth day ; and it can be seen that there is no disagreement but harmony. It is assumed that the third day or period ends in darkness ; if there has been a break of day, a morning, there has not been daylight and sunshine ; the sun has not risen above the horizon ; it is like an arctic winter night, a twilight, and the hope that the light, and its cause, will yet be revealed. It is a weakness in men that they think and express their thoughts in physical signs ; this is their order of thought, their means of education ; and it is difficult to see how this can be surmounted. The link betwixt the third generation and the fourth is psychic ; the spirit of man has surveyed the passing visions of the awful flood that spread over the earth : there is a vision of a new earth purified by water ; a sacrifice by fire ; a man, a family, a vineyard ; there is life and the living ; a man, men, things, and it is upon this microcosm of the earth that the eye of the Spirit is turned to discern whether the taint of sin has been washed out of the souls of men or not. This is the psychic problem ; it is not a hopeful one ; the mind is sensuous, sunk in self-indulgence, naked, dark, unconscious of its state ; the intellect takes delight in exposing this sinful, degraded condition, and the moral and spiritual powers would throw a veil over what is shameful. This is allegory, or something like it ; only the allegory reaches down very deep into the nature of men and of things ; and the vision is from the standpoint of the method of Christ.

It is to be observed that the story of the generations of the sons of Noah deal with the world and its history ; it is a worldwide vision of the psychic development of mankind. The micro-

cosm of this vision is found in Noah and his sons and the vineyard ; or it may be in the still narrower compass of a human soul. It is evident that before what these visions represent is known, it is necessary that men should possess light to understand them. Here men are found intently studying a few names and narratives of history ; the names are almost unintelligible symbols ; the few stories given are prehistoric ; and yet they lie at the root of that history which men are so anxious to understand. In Noah and his sons there is, as it were, a new beginning of some kind ; the past is dead ; the outward forms have perished, and thus the mysteries to be studied are life as arising out of force, or matter, and spirit, and mind. This is the psychic problem in a man, or in mankind ; and this psychic vision is summed up in the generations of the sons of Noah. Perhaps reference to the fourth day of creation may throw a little light upon this subject ; in fact, without such light the feeling is that men are wandering in a realm of darkness ; they are as in a great graveyard among tombstones, and they cannot see ; or there is no light by which they can see what is around them. As on the fourth day God is represented as creating the sun, the moon, and the stars in the heaven for light, for signs, for seasons, and for ruling or government, so here the new creation in Noah of what is living spiritually, psychically, is to be revealed, made manifest in Shem, Ham, and Japheth. There may be doubt as to whether Shem or Japheth is the eldest son ; the order is Shem, Ham, and Japheth, as a rule, and thus the inference that Shem is the eldest, the heir, and that Japheth is in turn the youngest. It may be said that Ham as representing the intellect, in order of development, arises before Shem as representing the moral nature in man ; but this is a human conception of order ; the twins live together ; the moral is Lord, ruler, sun ; the intellect is subject, servant, reflector of light, the moon ; Japheth the younger, as representing the heavenly grace, is symbolised by the stars ; the powers that transcend the conceptions of men. It is evident that all this verges upon mythology ; it is a vision from creation, and from prehistoric times, and thus the problem is this : What are the facts ? or, What do these things mean ? The answer to What ? as already suggested, is twofold ; as to Being, Reality, or Essence, there is no rational reply ; it is fact beyond any doubt, and men must accept the fact and believe it ; upon this point there is no choice ; this is spiritual, not intellectual, truth, and there the matter ends.

The second aspect of the question is turned away from the ultimate to the related and conditioned, to time and history, to man and mankind, and it is this aspect of the question What? that is dealt with in the generations of Noah's sons.

There is a risk here, it may be, of not comprehending the limits that surround these generations; they are not intellectual, as science; they are not moral, as government; and they are not spiritual, as religious; they are a psychic study rising to experience and empiricism, but they are not to be studied as in the light of the Christian age. The vision is "after the Flood," all past sensible forms have been left behind; the centre for study is the soul or the mind; and thus the true value of the study is psychical, not physical. It may be interesting to know in what way migrations of families took place, and nations were formed; but the real problem to be worked out is the spiritual development of the kingdom of Grace in the world. It may be stated here for the purpose of removing pre-conceptions, which in the order of empiricism exist in the minds of many; that it is not necessary to conclude that the Flood covered the whole earth and destroyed all living creatures; the vision of truth here is even more serious, more awful in its results, it is a spiritual judgment upon men; they were earthly and sensual, dead to God, truth and righteousness; the choice they had made to serve the earthly was confirmed; they were permitted to have their own way; the grace of Life, in its development, was withdrawn from them; and thus for millenniums these races known as Scythians, Tartars, etc., etc., have remained in the same semi-barbarous degraded state. Even whilst living they have been dead; although it is fair and right to conceive that God did not withdraw from them the gifts of Grace He bestowed upon them through their fathers. What is suggested here as to the races of mankind is that the Bible is a spiritual Word; its relations to history are secondary; the letter of the Word as verbal chronicle is secondary; the Word is spiritual throughout as to its development and purpose, and only when the spiritual in Christ is reached will men attain to the spiritual harmony that is embodied in it.

It is startling to find in approaching the study of this subject that the sons of Noah, Shem and Japheth have changed places; the firstborn, as from the realm of the dead, is Japheth not Shem; the first is last, and the last first. As with sense vision, the picture on the retina of the eye is not as it appears, but is inverted, so it may



be in psychic order, the psychical thought precedes the physical image ; here it is the spiritual first ; for the precedence must be given to the spiritual. What do men know of this spiritual, super-sensuous world of thought and its manifold developments ? Here are the symbols. I. (1) Japheth, (2) Gomer, (3) Magog, (4) Madai, (5) Javan, (6) Tubal, (7) Meshech, and (8) Tiras. There is a second line of development thus, (1) Gomer, (2) Ashkenaz, (3) Riphath, (4) Togarmah, (5) Javan, (6) Elishah, (7) Tarshish, (8) Kittim, (9) Dodanim. These represent the most highly favoured families of the sons of men ; they are the Gentile nations ; their homes can be traced in maps of past ages ; spiritual life and power for governing men, for literature, art, poetry, science, philosophy, and religion have been their spiritual endowments. Japheth has been enlarged in realms of every kind. This highly favoured son of the ages has been exalted above sun and moon ; his realm is universal, even to marvellous knowledge of the stars and the heavens. Blessed be the God of Japheth Who has given to His servants such endowments of power, life, spiritual insight, wisdom, government, and religion ; they are all summed up in Him Who is the Light to the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel. II. The race of Ham is numbered thus : (1) Ham, (2) Cush, (3) Mizraim, (4) Phut, (5) Canaan. The second generation are (1) Cush, (2) Seba, (3) Havilech, (4) Sabtah, (5) Raamah, (6) Sabtechah, (7) Raamah, (8) Sheba, (9) Dedan. These are names only to men, but it is right to conclude that under the names there exists spiritual concepts, and it may be profitable for those interested in such matters to find out what they mean, and the lines of thought into which they lead the student. III. The spiritual affinity and power residing in Ham breaks out in Nimrod the son of Cush ; “he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter.” His dominion and kingdom rested upon power and might, and his name is enthroned in glory in Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar. IV. The twin kingdom with Babel was founded by Asshur, and his famous cities are Nineveh, Rehoboth, Resen, and Calah. V. Mizraim, upper and lower Egypt, is also a great nation ; here the names are (1) Mizraim, (2) Ludim, (3) Anamim, (4) Lehabim, (5) Naphtuhim, (6) Pathrusim, (7) Casluhim, or Philistim, (8) Capthorim. VI. (1) Canaan, (2) Sidon, (3) Heth, (4) the Jebusite, (5) Amorite, (6) Girgasite, (7) Hivite, (8) Arkite, (9) Sinite, (10) Arvadite, (11) Zemarite, (12) Hamathite. This race is very numerous and widespread in its migrations ; and it is profitable to

study the families named, the countries they occupied, and the nations as they can be traced in history. VII. The Shemite race runs thus : (1) Shem, (2) Elam, (3) Asshur, (4) Arphaxad, (5) Lud, (6) Aram. The second generation (1) Aram, (2) Uz, (3) Hul, (4) Gether, (5) Mash, (6) Arphaxad's son Salah ; (7) Salah's son Eber ; Eber's two sons, Peleg and Joktan. This Peleg was named from that rupture that brought about division in the earth, and thus the monument raised to his memory is his own name as recording that important event among the sons of men. Joktan his brother had a goodly family, Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobah. These are the descendants of Shem in their families and nations and the lands where they settled. As time rolled past, these nations gained the ascendancy over the Cainites and the race of Seth, the giants, the shepherds, the lovers of music, and the artificers ; there was that in the sons of Noah which other peoples did not possess ; they were young, vital, enterprising, courageous ; they became the ruling races in the earth, and the symbols of their lordship may be found in the gods they worshipped : the sun, the moon and the stars. In this psychic pre-historic period there was one language, that of heart, lip or sound, and word. They migrated from place to place, and at last settled down with an empire centre in the plain of Shinar. They were ambitious, and sought after glory and greatness. They would build a tower that would reach even to heaven. What they attempted that they failed to do ; and what they aspired after that they did not attain. They would reach heaven by the wrong road, and thus darkness, confusion, and scattering. Even as it is with the human soul in its darkness, division, and confusion, so it has been with the nations of the earth ; their history is summed up in Babel—Confusion. Something like this is the story of the fourth day in creation, and the fourth the generations of Noah's sons. In the darkness men look for sun, moon, and stars, rulers, wise men and divine instructors ; and it is to find that these rulers are Nimrods, mighty hunters delighting in hunting and war ; that their wise men are poor magicians giving foolish advice as to building ; and their religious teachers have themselves been too often as blind guides leading blind men anywhere except in the right direction.

**THE GENERATIONS OF SHEM.**—Is it so that the visions of creation are enigmas and the generations in Genesis puzzles ? If it is granted

that such an interpretation is true, would this cancel the enigmas and destroy the puzzles ; or would the thought be suggested that seeing enigmas and puzzles seem to be similar and to illustrate each other, must there not have been intelligent wisdom behind enigmas and puzzles to put them together in such a way that they agree and throw light upon each other ? It is a simple fact that birds fly in the air, and yet how this is done by creatures so much heavier than the air is an enigma men have not solved ; they have not been able to make wings for themselves and soar upward into the heavens ; and their attempts to solve the enigma have been clumsy and useless. Why do fishes live in the water and die in the air ? Their breathing organs differ ; and it is concluded that men were not made to live in the water, neither were fishes made to live on the earth and breathe air. Men aspire, they would rise above the earth ; they do not desire to become mermen and live in the depths of the ocean. Is this a parable of the fifth day of creation ; a little story prepared for man long before he came into existence ? What is it that is lighter than air and more powerful in its movements than birds ? and what is it that descends deeper than fishes into the great deep and that cannot be drowned by water ? Is it not the intellect of man ? And if it is so much lighter, yet so much more powerful and wise than fowl or fish, is it not able to circumvent their movements and surpass them in all that they do in their varied spheres ? The intellect, as reason, has no limit within the conditions and relations of time and space ; it is lordly with spiritual power ; it is sharper than any two edged sword ; it pierces beyond flesh and bone and cleaves to the very spirit ; it is a Jerusalem blade of the finest make ; it divides images, thoughts, words, and concepts ; and yet when it reaches reality the power is gone, the edge is turned, it is useless. The mystery of image, thought, idea, concept, all meet in the abstract word, as language or written signs. It is in this region that the intellect lives and moves ; the ultimate word is in the name. This is so in the lower regions of experience and empiricism, for the intellect is at work in them ; but with science it is all important, because the work is upon names not things, upon relations of thoughts not their images. It is in this sense that the generations of Shem are so important ; because, as implied in the name Shem, men are seeking in it for a mystery it contains ; a sacred hidden Name. In a sense here is to be found the end, the result of all human reasoning ; it is the Ultimate,

the Name, Being. Science has been reaching after this conclusion for some time ; it moves in a great universe of thoughts and their relations, but centre and furthest circumference is the awful sacred Name. In the deepest of depths where no fish can descend, the Name is there ; and away beyond sky, heaven, and stars in their glory, there is found the Name. The realm is spiritual for the intellect inquires into all relations, but it cannot find God. The living germ of the intellect in divine wisdom may be found on the other side of the flood in that physical world wherein the wisdom of God is made manifest ; but the generations begin on this side, in the psychic realms of spirit and mind. This is the allegorical form in which the generations of Shem are recorded ; and the great concept embodied in this family is the age long search after the sacred, exalted Name. Arphaxad means Chaldea as a boundary and a power set free. Salah that which sprouts, utterance, request, prayer. Eber, to pass over to a new region. Peleg, division. Ram, same as Raguel, friend of God, associate. Serug, branch or shoot. Nahor, to breathe hard, to burn (sacrifice ?). Terah, to delay, to stop with. Abraham, the high father of faith. Whether it is wise to study this puzzle further is doubtful ; there may be a record of development embodied in the signs, but the issue is not of much importance ; it is in a region of thought passed over briefly in Scripture, and thus it may be hidden wisdom. The story may be conceived thus : It is true wisdom to seek to know the Divine Name, or rather how God reveals His wisdom to men. The beginning was in Chaldea in the days of Arphaxad ; there was life in the Word of wisdom ; thus it sprouted into Divine thoughts and prayers. It passed from that land, because of idolatry, into another region, as by Abraham ; it was carried into Egypt as a Divine seed ; it was delivered from earthly bondage, and was taken into the good land of Promise, and there it grew into a great and famous tree and filled the land. The enemy came, the tree was destroyed, and a new branch came out of the root of the old tree ; that branch grew a noble branch in hard perilous times, when spiritual life was painful and difficult ; there was delay in the development and growth of the tree, but in the end it was filled with spiritual power and was made the means of blessing to all nations.

THE GENERATIONS OF TERAH.—It has been pointed out that in the sixth day of creation there are two divisions, the one as synchronising with the intellect, the order of development in the

lower creatures upon the earth, and the other as falling in with the moral nature of man as possessing power, authority, and dominion over all subject nature. When the first alone is possessed then the creature is subtle and cunning, like the serpent; but when manhood and the moral nature are conceived as possessed by a creature, then this amounts to God likeness; man reflects the image of God in his thoughts, his reasoning, and in his actions. This is the glory of man; and it may fairly be concluded that men of all schools are in general terms agreed upon this fact, that the moral nature man possesses, in harmony with his intellectual powers, is that which constitutes manhood, and raises him above all other creatures upon the face of the earth. The formula of creation, as a rule, runs thus, "God said," "God made," and "God saw." When the fifth stage is reached then "God blessed" is added; and in the sixth the blessing rests upon beast and man, but on the beast through man. The glory of creation is God, as reflected, imaged, made manifest in man. This is the consummation of creation, it reflects the power, life, spirit, thoughts, designs, and purposes of God in wisdom; and man is the mirror reflecting that glory by his intellectual power in understanding the Divine Order as truth; and by making truth divine in his moral nature and actions. This is the issue of Terah; it is the station, terminus, stopping-place of creation and of re-creation; it brings to an end a cycle of development, and the instructive question asked is this: Where is the man?

As in creation, so with the work of re-creation, the order of development, and what links past, present, and future, together must be considered. Terah is linked to Shem; Shem is a son of Noah; Noah traces his descent from Adam; and Adam is a moral creature, a son of God, in His likeness. That likeness was lost, and, this is the order of re-creation and restoration to God-likeness. Terah's descendants are three, Abram, Nahor, and Haran; they are like the sons of Noah, only there is a change in the order; here they run spiritual, moral, and intellectual. The intellectual is a native of Ur of the Chaldees; it was in this region that the intellectual powers of men were first active, living, true, and right; but the true intellectual powers of man died there; the truth became perverted by error and idolatry; and thus the son and successor was not a real lover of truth, for truth's sake; he became covetous, idolatrous, sensual, and thus degraded. Because of error, idolatry, injustice, the de--

gradation of manhood, as found in the rulers of Mesopotamia, Terah and his family migrated and reached Haran in Syria, and in this region Terah died ; in other words he did not find grace and truth ; he did not quite purge himself and his family from idolatry, the worship of false images and ideals ; and he did not reach that land of Promise toward which they had migrated.

This is the connection with the past ; it is for men to trace these things in history if they can ; there has been an order of development followed, and men being intellectually endowed they are in a position to find out the facts in a reasonable way. It is different, however, when the intellectual and moral fail, and the intervention of the Lord is necessary to reveal to men the way of salvation and restoration ; then the methods of men are of no use, the Lord's Voice must be heard, and the only way to hear that voice is by the way of faith. This is the ultimate ; and it is useless to deny the fact ; if fallen sinful men would be restored to the Divine favour, to likeness to God, then let them clearly understand that moral suasion, intellectual reasonings, psychic experiences, and physical sensuous signs, are utterly useless ; the link broken can only be restored by the Word of faith, heard by the spirit ; and this is the link by which men begin to become conscious of the life of God. It is this almighty power of God in Grace, by faith, that is of so much importance ; because by it men hear the voice of God ; they receive the promises of God ; they are blessed by God ; and in them there is enshrined that blessing of Grace by faith that will be the means of blessing to all nations. Abram heard the voice of God ; by faith he migrated, not knowing whither ; he sought the promised inheritance and found it ; thus he is named the father of all those who live by faith in the realm of the Divine promises ; and the physical, psychical, intellectual, and moral worlds by which men are surrounded, do not agree with that sublime realm of faith with which they are endowed. This is the glory of the mystery of faith in God, of true manhood ; when it is possessed, and there is consciousness of that possession, then the altar of consecration is raised over body, soul, and all that is spiritual, and the Name of the Lord is called upon that which has been redeemed and restored to the new life in Christ. This is spiritual fact ; it rises above famine and hunger, power and pleasure, evil desires and passions, strife and separation ; these are as nothing when compared with the promises of God in Christ ; they are already

blessings enjoyed in which the soul can find delight, and the saved are invited to enjoy to the full, in all their length and breadth, these blessings possessed as a spiritual inheritance.

The man of faith, thus living to God by Christ, sojourns in a land amid surroundings that are out of harmony with the Will of God. The picture to the faithful is not peace and prosperity, but rather of ambition, selfishness, self-glorying, strife, and war. This is not a vision of faith only, it is the history of mankind; and the war of the kings in the Vale of Siddim is like all history engraven with a pen of iron and written with the blood of men upon the face of the earth. This kind of thing has been conceived by men under the false glamour of ambition, lordship, dominion; the great aspire to reign over and to rob men; the weak suffer, the sorrowful mourn, and there is not always a son of God near to punish evil-doers and rescue prisoners from their cruel captors. There is something mysterious about this man and son of God; he is a very great prince and his courage and skill are beyond question; still, it is revealed that there is One greater than the father of the faithful, and His title is Lord of Righteousness of the City of Peace. It is to this mystical, mysterious Person that gifts and offerings are due; and when He is honoured men find that they are blessed, and that their enemies are delivered into their hands. This is the vision of faith in the light of day; but in the darkness of night, and in forebodings, is it so very strange if the paralysis of fear, the dread of the future and a losing of the spirit of hope seem to fall upon the soul? Cheer up, sad soul, the night of mourning will pass; God is a great Shield in the night of trouble and darkness; and He is to all the faithful, an "exceeding great reward." How can faith live when there is no seed or child of faith? It is night, sad child of faith; look up, not down; see how beautiful are these innumerable stars in the vault of heaven. Even so, once they were invisible to sight, but He caused them to shine in glory in the heavens; and so it will be with the children of faith, they will be beyond numbering and they will shine in glory for ever. This is another of the great visions of faith; to believe this is to be made strong when the hours of horror and great darkness come; it is by such visions that the afflicted and the enslaved are encouraged, and the end will be redemption, comfort, the fulfilment of promises and victory over enemies.

It is necessary to pause here and think upon what seems to be

emerging out of this vision of faith as represented in Abraham. Whence this story, this strange revelation of a new life and a new man, as the result of faith, or belief in the Word of God ? Already it has been discerned that it can be traced from Terah back to God, and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews follows the same stages ; thus, Abraham, Noah, Enoch, Abel, Faith as operative upon Creation, and Faith as Substance, Reality, God. This is the reply to Whence ? and the call is direct from God, followed by the migration into Canaan. In response to When ? It is only necessary to take spiritual photographs of the wars, subjection, robbery, bloodshed, the train of captives, the Nemesis on the heels of the invaders, their overthrow, rescue ; one greater than kings or Abraham in the midst ; the vision of horror and darkness ; Egypt, or the world, and the great and precious promises of God. This is time and history ; these are the living photographs to be studied by all men in the Word of God. The vision is wonderful, with its graphic power, and it deserves the most careful study. But in advancing a stage further in this story, the question next in order is Why ? and, as has been seen, this question enters into motive, design, purpose, and means, as related to the end desired. The end desired is the heir, as related to the promises and the inheritance ; the mortals who are interested in this matter are Abraham, Sarah, and incidentally Hagar and Ishmael. It is not necessary to introduce into the story the modern Christian conceptions of marriage ; the story is a photograph, a psychic allegory, a prevision of history and revelation ; it is not something to sit in judgment upon ; the development is not twentieth century A.D., it is twentieth century B.C. ; thus judgment is not by any means within the horizon of thought. Why ? this strange, short-sighted, psychic, sensuous, earthly way of attempting to bring about, fulfil the purpose of God ? It is psychic allegory, and it is historic fact. God's purpose of Grace in Christ is long delayed ; and as Sarah was old before Isaac was born, so Israel as a nation and church was very old before the Christ was born in Bethlehem. The ignorant, sensuous, undeveloped, cannot wait God's time and way ; they think, give up hope, and are ready to use means to gain their end, which is not God's ; and they fail to see that this is not faith and divine wisdom ; it is impatience and unbelief in the wisdom and power of God. Not by the free, the spiritual, the beloved, the gracious, will the symbolic fulfilment of the promises come, but by Hagar, Egypt, law, the desert, priests, altars, and



vestments ; things seen and tangible ; by Ishmael, the seed of strife ; by theology, and by theologians, the men who can never agree upon Divine wisdom. Poor unhappy Ishmael, ever at war, ever causing strife and ill-will ; he has had a prolific seed in all generations, and he still dwells in the presence of his brethren in all lands. This may be the Why ? as related to the motives and purposes of men. God is represented as permitting this development among men in the household of faith, Why ? So that men may know that He beholds the afflictions of His children, and hears their cries ; and that they might be able to respond to His voice by saying, " Thou God seest me " ; and reason within their own souls in this fashion, " Have I also here looked after Him that seeth me ? " Why did God permit this episode in the family of Abraham ? This is a very large question, it lies at the root of all religions that have spiritual power in them ; it is the cause of the great division in the household of faith ; it is the exoteric and the esoteric ; it is idolatry and priests ; it is Egyptian forms and symbolic concepts ; it is Mosaism and Christianity ; it is priesthood, vestures, and ceremonies, and spiritual worship. It is man psychic, ignorant, foolish, impatient, imprudent, wrong-headed, and blind-hearted, seeking to fulfil the purposes of God by carnal means ; by what is negative, regulative, and non-spiritual. God permits all this, makes it matter of experience, of empiricism, so that, by this means, the visible and tangible may be changed into the psychical ; and the psychical into the moral and spiritual. Thus there arises the concept that when Abraham was ninety-nine years of age — had, so to speak, attained to a manifold development of the Holy Spirit, then the Lord appeared as the Almighty God, before Whom men ought to walk sincerely and uprightly. The man Abraham had attained to psychic manhood in the full sense of empiricism ; he becomes an actor in the Divine Covenant ; in his name and nature God is enshrined ; he becomes the father of many nations ; and the sign, the psychical sign of this Covenant is circumcision in the flesh. The stage of development must be studied here, it is very important ; the Covenant, mark, name is in the flesh, and any not circumcised are to be named as dead, for they have broken the Covenant, that is in the flesh. The explanation follows in due order ; this Covenant is embodied in Isaac as sign, it is Christ in the flesh ; for in Him alone can the Covenant of Faith be established, and made the means of blessing to all nations. This is the response to the question Why ? On the side of man throughout

history a series of unbelieving misconceptions of Divine truth ; **Hagar**, Ishmael, strife, training, education ; on the part of God and **the Word**, Christ and the way of spiritual salvation by faith in Him as God's Covenant of Grace.

Passing from the mystery of the Spirit and His work in the revelation of God through faith the thoughts turn in another direction, and the question that is to be asked, in the order of development is, What ? Not the What of the Absolute and Ultimate Reality ; but rather that of fact, as taking earthly form, through the spirit and the works of men. Here two pictures are presented for study ; these being faith and unbelief, good and evil, light and darkness, salvation and judgment. How pleasant the picture of the tent in the plains of Mamre, the appearance of the **Lord**, the visit of the angels, the noble Abraham, the gracious hospitality, the homely Sarah with her meal and cakes ; the revelation of grace that brought hope ; the joy and laughter of Sarah ; the hard, improbable, almost impossible events predicted ; and the gentle rebuke of the angels that any one should be so foolish as to think that there is anything too hard for God to perform that He has promised. Just so : this is the tent where faith has lived throughout the ages. Many angels have visited the sons of men ; they have made homes happy by their visits ; and men **knew** not that they were entertaining heavenly messengers sent on errands of mercy and blessing. If only the eyes of the faithful had been open what wonders they might have seen ; the ladder has really been there all the time ; the angels have been coming and going, but men could not see or understand. Let men leave the tent where faith resides and accompany the angels and Abraham and look toward Sodom. This is not a full revelation of the darkness, of evil, and of judgment ; it is just a word to reveal the truth, so that the faithful may know a little about these matters, so that they may learn wisdom, walk in the light and do justice and judgment. Alas ! it is not a pleasant mission that leads the Lord and His companions to Sodom ; the cry has reached heaven ; the sin has become very grievous ; and the Lord **has** actually come in person to visit men, to inquire, and to fine out by experience, the real facts of the case. Faith pleads that the wicked may be spared, saved ; and angels go into the streets and are brutally insulted. The mystery of evil is in Sodom ; the sensual, the depraved, cannot discern spiritual messengers ; they are blind to truth and righteousness, the judgments of God fall

upon them, and they are lost. If righteous Lot is scarcely saved, just dragged out of filthy Sodom with his daughters, what hope is there for the ungodly, the desperately wicked, who will not believe that they are in danger, and who scoff at those who give them warning? The vision of Lot and his daughters requires consideration. What has this man profited by the spirit of strife and covetousness? He lost his possessions in the war; he was rescued from bondage; he sunk into the filth of Sodom where his children were debased and degraded in their thoughts; and the issue is incest in the most repugnant form. Morally, their actions were bestial; there is not merely dishonour of the father from whence they sprang; there was inquiry in an irreverent spirit; and it is, in a mystical sense, the intellectual degradation of thought which may be traced in some forms of philosophy. The curtain falls upon the scene; Sodom lies in the depths of the Dead Sea; let the doorway of the filthy cave be shut up for ever; this is not a fit place for the spiritual children of God, for those who have listened to the voice of faith, and to the precious promises of God for the salvation of mankind.

The thoughts require to be turned away from this terrible picture; the study is far from pleasant; it raises many questions; and there may be a valuable hint in the abrupt closing of the story, not to pursue the problem any further. The revelation being made, let men ponder seriously, thoughtfully, over what they have seen; it is applicable to cities and nations; and it is applicable to a human soul, so it is well to be reticent and reverent and pass on in fear and trembling. The next aspect of this mystic life of Abraham has to be questioned by that keen analyst so much favoured by science, How? Let the intellect be used and see what the result will be in this portion of the story of the life of faith. To what may life be compared? Even to a journey, and a brief visit to a strange land. In this instance it is to the Philistine country to a people near the coast; to the realm and region of those who are sensuous and not spiritual; and who, it may be presumed, being idolaters, have not the knowledge or fear of God in their hearts. Thus men may judge, and they may have good reasons for reaching such conclusions; but the reasonings of men are not always to be relied upon, because, as men know, the fear of God is often found where least expected; and truth and righteousness live where men look for error and unrighteousness. It may be, as befitting the story, and the stage

of development, that the intellect is called upon to consider the strange story of Abraham and Sarah as brother and sister, and also at the same time as husband and wife. The explanation is that they were half-brother and sister; their father being Terah, whilst their mothers were different. It is somewhat strange that no record is given of the name of either mother; whilst care is taken to state that Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran. In such a study as this genealogy becomes interesting; it becomes intensely psychic in form; and where such a subject foreshadows great spiritual thoughts it may be profitable to linger by the way and ask, How this matter may be conceived as spiritual truth? Taking the name Faith as representing Abraham, and Grace as representing Sarah, it is conceived that they both belong to the divine family of God; Faith as of direct descent and spiritual; and Grace as being made manifest through an earthly mother such as the mother of Nahor and Haran. Faith is divine and spiritual; Grace is the divine made manifest in what is good, winsome, gracious, beautiful. Faith is not always beloved by men; it speaks of God and duty; Grace is loved because it is so charming, natural, and desirable. To link Grace and Faith together is not the usual way with men that are sensuous; they link what is winsome and gracious with nature, and not with Faith and the Divine Father from whence they are derived. But the religious man, the theologian, may say this is mythology and not revelation; vain imaginings and not historic truth; and, to a certain extent, the charge must be admitted; it is not the practical, commonsense, empirical reading of the Word, and it is a brief visit into a realm of thought where those who are only practical and theological students should not venture. This journey of Abraham, however, is not taken to please practical men and theologians; it is into a strange realm, which he did not understand, among men who did not understand him; and yet it is to a king who has an ear open Heavenward, for God can reach his soul by dreams; and in the visions of the night the man can hear the Voice of God. There is a winsome, divine creature beloved by faith, sometimes received into the courts of kings; the beauty of sensuous religion they desire, it graces kings, and courts; but faith and true spiritual worship are not so desirable and acceptable; they speak for God, limit the power and authority of kings, limit desires, passions, and pleasures, and they speak of truth and righteousness in the

face of error and wickedness. The story may be history or allegory, myth or parable ; thus it will be well for men not to limit the vision to their own particular way of looking at it ; this journey may touch many points in the wanderings of men. This may be how God has spoken to kings throughout the ages ; how the spiritual may have been jeopardised for the natural, the gracious, and the winsome ; how faith has been fearful, timorous, ignorant, and unjust in judgment ; how kings and peoples, even though idolaters and sensuous, have not been devoid of morality and the sense of justice and fairness ; and how God has been pleased, even by such means as dreaming, the voice of conscience, and in ways men do not understand, by His Spirit, to preserve men from evil, teach them their duties and guide them to do what is just and right.

Thus far the picture of the journey of history and life, in practical experience, in quaint allegory, or in mystic myth, for all are required ; there are stages in development for them all, and thus the benefit of wise and careful study instead of ignorance and premature, imperfect judgments. How has it fared with the family of the faithful and the house of God, in the tent at Beersheba, close by the well of living truth, and of the faithful fulfilling of the promises of God, during the period of history ? Even as He promised, so His promises have come true ; the light of their life came not, as might have been expected, when Abraham and Sarah were young ; but when their natural powers were on the wane, even when Abraham was 100 years old. In mystic numbers the Son Christ begins the third dispensation, the past is summed up in Him, and in Him the promises of God are fulfilled. This is not a doleful message, but a pleasant Gospel, it may be expressed in the words of Sarah : " God hath made me to laugh, so that all who hear may laugh with me." The angels summed up the thought in their song, as glad tidings of great joy, and surely this is the right attitude of the soul of man towards the most marvellous revelation of God conveyed to men throughout the ages. In vision Isaac and Jesus are one ; it is Jesus that is the Light and Truth, and Isaac is the foreshadow of the truth ; but apart from Jesus, he is not even a shadow in history. How did the faithful receive the child when He came ? It was made a festive season ; and all were invited to the great feast. This is the Scriptural thought of Christ and the Gospel ; and it is amply illustrated in varied forms in Isaiah and in the Gospels.

But there is a change in the vision and the story is told how the first-born, the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, mocked the heir at this feast, in the presence of the faithful. This is a story with many phases of thought ; it is the elder brother and the younger, Mosaism and Christianity, Law and Grace, Churchism and Protestantism. It is the bond-woman and her son as against the free-woman and her son ; and as Faith and Grace are both free, and cannot be bound by earthly fetters, not even of silk and gold ; there is no choice, the fettered must be set free ; and only by being cast out, and thus becoming free, can they have any hope of becoming free-men. Naturally, such forms of strife, as to the first place, pre-eminence, dogma, and similar subjects, are grievous to a living faith ; they are disputes about what is sensuous and earthly ; about present possessions ; and, as can be seen plainly, the things enjoyed throughout the ages have been the shadows of the good things to come and not the realities into which the people of God have not entered or taken possession. What is the verdict of history upon this one struggle in many phases ? Not what it may be supposed the Church, in its Churchism, would assert, that Protestantism is turned out of the tent of faith to perish in the desert ; but if the analogies are true, the real casting out is of the self-asserting Church ; and the faithful, the children of God, the free-born by Grace, remain in the tent. Cain was cast out and Seth remained at home ; Esau went to Edom, Jacob inherited the promises ; Mosaism and Judaism were cast out and Christianity became the means of blessing to the nations ; Law, as conceived by the Jews, has been abolished and Grace reigns. They are blind who do not see that Churchism as expressed in a pope, prelates, priests, ritual, and ceremonies, no matter to what Church they belong, are out in the desert, and even now they are living in the great wilderness of this world. This seems to be a strange illustration of the teaching of Christ ; those who think themselves first may be last ; those who exalt themselves may require to be humbled ; poor Church and Churchism, they are not to be envied, not even if wedded to Egyptian forms ; or established and raised to honour in the world. It looks bad for Churchism, with all its privileges, if it is by faith and grace, humility and faithful service, that the children of God enter the true Church of Christ and remain there ; it may be true that Churchmen and Protestants alike require to reconsider their position ; there are first, who appear to be so, who

are really last ; and there are those thought to be last, not worthy of consideration, who are really first in the kingdom of Grace. This is How such things happen in the Kingdom of God ; men familiar with the scientific order of thought know that this is the rule in science and not the exception. When Christ comes, with His piercing light of truth, men's conceptions may be completely reversed ; let men, counted wise in the Churches, try to conceive that this may be so in their realm of truth also ; they are not all-wise and infallible, thus it can be conceived that changes are possible even where men think they have a preferential claim upon Divine Truth.

The story about Abimelech the King, and Phicol his chief captain coming to Abraham as petitioners that he would be their friend and the friend of their people is one of those incidents hardly conceivable. How is it that a heathen and idolatrous Philistine has attained to such a knowledge of God ? How is it that he prizes Abraham's friendship so highly ? Faith has changed these men ; they have become friends of the friend of God ; they trust God and His servant ; and they love truth, justice, and righteousness. It is good to stand by the side of these men as they stand before God and enter into covenant with each other. Let kings, statesmen, and churchmen note the fact, it is not Abimelech that bestows gifts on Abraham, but Abraham on Abimelech ; it is not for the State to pet and pamper the Church ; it is the Church that should bless the State ; and even as the seven ewe lambs may be conceived as conveying the sevenfold blessing of life to Philistia, so faith by the true spiritual Church of Christ may become the means of spiritual life, in all its fulness, to the State and to all nations. The Covenant of the well and Oath at Beer-Sheba is evidently an event of importance ; this is how State and Church may live together in peace and amity ; let the Church become rich with the favours of God ; and let the State realise that only through the blessing of God can a State be righteous and prosperous. It is time for men to return to this well of living water, and to unite together in calling upon "the name of the Lord, the everlasting God."

How things ought to be done, and how they have been carried out in history are quite different subjects ; in the latter case the study is that of experience and empiricism, and in the former the knowledge that is attained by science, by the knowledge of law and order, by the vision of the method of Christ. It is not

necessary that these realms of thought should contradict, or be out of harmony with, each other, only it is to be recognised that during the period of change the two forms of thought may not seem to agree. What men think they have discovered to be true requires to be reviewed, and it is during this period of change that men lose faith in God, in his Word, in the conceptions of wise men, and in their own judgments. This is the crisis; the sea of troubles surround men, and, being at sea without compass, chart, or rudder, the result may well be that they will sail round in a circle and fail to comprehend why no real advance is made. The illustration is an important one, in this sense, it is faith in God, as faith in the soul, that is the only safe compass on the ocean of life. To lose faith is to lose the only reliable guide in the midst of cloudy, overcast, stormy days and nights, when neither sun, moon, nor stars can be seen. Just as the magnetised earth and the magnetised compass correspond with each other, so by faith the soul turns to its magnet pole in Christ, and all is well; there is a mysterious correspondence, and it is Christ that gives steadiness to the magnet of the soul. But this parable of nature stretches beyond the soul and Christ, the Image of God; there is the mystery of the sun with its radiant influence making the earth a magnet; and who can tell in what way the sun is affected by the universe of stars of which it is, with all its satellites, a very small portion. Faith steadies the wandering thoughts of men; without faith they are like erratic comets of that kind which have no defined orbital motion; away they go into the darkness of the depths of space, and men cannot tell from whence they came or whither they are going.

In the life of Abraham the reverse of such conditions are made manifest; the order of his orbit of life is definable; and if men only knew what his life means, the lessons it contains would be of immense value. The remarkable thing in this wonderful life is that in its beginning, purpose, varied events, and destined end, there is that which every child can understand; it is a great object lesson, and the Spirit in the story and the spirit in the child are face to face. It is instinctively felt that to analyse and criticise such a life is out of place; this is not what it was meant for, but rather an example is given for the child that he may walk in the footsteps of, and try to be like, faithful Abraham. Whilst all this is true, the problem of the development is there, and thus the child must grow in years and wisdom before the real meaning of



the life can be understood. Abraham did not know the meaning of his own life : in the very nature of things this is not possible for any man ; it is still true that all men are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth, and some have been guided to seek a better, even a heavenly country ; and of such, it is written, God is not ashamed to call them His children. It is within the mystery of manhood that such problems arise ; men know that sin abounds and that evil reigns upon the earth ; and thus the question through all generations in all nations has been, Who will bring deliverance ? Who will overthrow evil ? Who, or by whom, or in what way, are reconciliation and peace to come to men ? To deny that such thoughts have occupied the attention of men would be foolish ; they lie at the root of all religions, myths, legends, and stories for children ; it is the inborn and the ever uttered cry wrung from every thoughtful soul in its day of sore trial ; it is the cry everywhere, in all communities of men, Who will deliver ? Who will reconcile all things ? Who will bring peace ? It is not enough to survey history and discern how events have occurred ; that may be the work of philosopher and historian, as they sit comfortably in easy chairs in the midst of their books, with not a pin prick of the world's troubles touching them ; but when the flesh of flesh, bone of bone, spirit of spirit, soul of soul, are torn apart by the problems of sin, evil, pain, sacrifice, reconciliation with God and peace among men, then the conditions are entirely changed ; the matter is personal, and it has to do with that which man loves best, which to renounce is even worse than death. It is with such a thought, and in such a spirit that the child of God looks upon the story of the great trial of the faith of Abraham. In some way or other this story is an awful fact of history, of personal experience, of national importance, of world-wide significance, of universal wonder. It begins with Abraham and Isaac as visible objects for study, although the ideal behind the form lies farther off, in the depths of the heavens, in the mercy and love of God, and thus the conceptions of men stretch forward from Moriah to Calvary and to the consummation of all things in Christ. Let the story be true and literal fact, with what intense interest the child will follow Abraham every step in that sad journey ; see Isaac with his burden, himself both altar and sacrifice ; listen to the innocent question of the lad and the enigmatical answer ; the preparation for sacrifice ; the substitute found ; the intense relief of father and son ; and the Divine Voice uttering

blessings upon the man who could in this manner rise above all that was natural and human ; even what seemed to be contrary to moral law and to true conceptions of God. The story is very wonderful ; almost too strange to be true ; it is a consummation of faith in the soul of man, before which men may sit down in amazement ; and thus it is little wonder if the faithless have said the story cannot be true ; it is an outrage on the human soul and unthinkable. Just so men may reason, and it would be strange if they reasoned differently ; for, apart from faith, there could not be any explanation of the story. Who could expect that any man could rise to such an altitude of faith and act in such a manner ? But what if this picture in the child's story book is a true picture of a Divine event of transcendent importance ? What if these things are literally true in the highest sense ; will such an interpretation, revelation, consummation, change the story and make it less effective ? Presume that the picture becomes history, science, law, then how wonderful the coincidence, how divine the story, the picture, and the fulfilment. The vision is one in varied stages. It is conceived as a great trial—a contest betwixt light and darkness, truth and error, good and evil ; a great decision ; a long journey ; a definite place ; a son bearing a cross ; a God provided sacrifice ; an offering acceptable to God—and through all these, by their means, blessings to mankind which altogether surpass men's highest conceptions. Who is the deliverer ? Who is the Saviour from sin ? Who is the Traveller and Cross Bearer ? Who is this Substitute that takes man's place ? Who is it that bestows upon men all Divine blessings ? It is Jesus, the Christ. There is no one to be compared with him ; and He reveals Himself by his own method as now revealed to mankind.

This great renunciation of self is the climax in the story of Abraham ; the man, as he ought to be in the spirit of faith is revealed ; men may study the vision and be instructed by it ; or they may turn aside and pass on their way in their blindness, thinking and saying that this also is a superstition ; a myth of the imagination ; and a phantasm not worthy the consideration of wise men. In a sense what they say is true ; it contains a truth, but not the whole truth ; in other words, they look **only** upon the seen and the tangible ; they reason upon psychic related thoughts ; and thus history to them is the earthly life of the patriarch, the fact that he is the head of the Jewish nation and of tribes of Arabs ; that his son

Isaac married a cousin, the daughter of Bethuel, Rebekah by name, and that through Isaac the history of the people of Israel is to be traced.

The student of the mystery of faith, the divine life that is from Heaven, will not readily turn away from what he conceives to be spiritual truth, even though it may be very difficult to reach the meaning. Development has taught men that things are not so simple as they seem to onlookers ; but that they are very complex in their order, and almost inextricable in their diversities when the thinker is entangled in the manifold conceptions of other men. Science is steadily reducing these maze-like avenues of human thought ; and it may be that the method of Christ will reveal a system of thought so beautiful and complete, so simple and acceptable, that men will wonder why the wise men in past ages managed to miss their way, seeing that they were ever crossing the avenues of thought being revealed by Christ. Here the stage reached is of a very complex interesting kind ; there is the conception as to creation and the order of development ; the Fall of man and a new order of re-creation. The generations, as has been shown, synchronise with the order of creation ; the same order is followed in the generations ; and in Abraham these generations find their climax and consummation. In fact, Abraham is seen to be a new man, even a new kind of man ; and the story of his life is the story of the development of man in the realm of Grace, by the mercy of God through the Divine power known as faith. It may be well to glance briefly at this analogy of creation and re-creation ; the first day of creation speaks of chaos, darkness, Spirit motion, light, light and dark, day and night ; the first period of Abraham's history is derived from the chaos of Babylonia and its peoples ; the darkness of idolatry ; the Spirit of God and the Call ; the light of truth ; the light and dark shades of life and the experiences of men ; the revelation of Faith as Divine in God and Christ, the Sun of all grace and truth, and as reflected from Abraham by his life of faith in God. The second day in creation reveals separation of waters from waters, the firmament and heaven. The second period in Abraham's life, the wars and conflicts of the kings ; the revelation of Melchizedek ; the vision of the night with its horrors pointing to Egypt ; and the heaven to be realised in the promises. The third day of creation speaks of sea and earth being separated, and the development of grass, herb, and

seed. The third period of Abraham's life is the story of Sarah, Hagar and Ishmael ; the promise of Isaac by Sarah ; and the two seeds, by law and grace, in Ishmael and Isaac. The fourth day in creation refers to sun, moon, and stars being created, and their uses to rule and to measure time. The fourth period in Abraham's life is taken up with the appearing of the Lord and the life at Mamre ; and the terrible story of the destruction of Sodom by God. The Sun reigns in righteousness ; faith pleads for the doomed in their darkness, and those who seek after the light of truth are saved from destruction by the patient, powerful mercy of God. The fifth day of creation speaks of the creation of fowls of the air and fishes in the sea ; the intellectual vision of truth ; the fifth period of Abraham's life is taken up with the Philistines ; the birth of Isaac ; the feast, Ishmael, and the desert ; and the reconciliation and sacrifice at Beersheba ; in all these there being revelations of important truths which man only as an intellectual being can understand. The sixth day of creation reveals the beasts of the earth, and the creation of man in the likeness of God ; and the sixth period in Abraham's life is in the conceptions that arise from a world lying in sin, degraded, beastly, selfish, and self-seeking, as compared with God, Abraham, Isaac, and that great trial and sacrifice. This is the new creation in Christ ; the revelation of the new man after the spirit of faith.

It is not necessary to enter into further details in connection with this first fulfilment of the Divine work of salvation ; it is certain that Abraham had no conception that he was, in the flesh, a fulfilment, and a complete summation of the period of history that had come to an end in him. It is also certain that his contemporaries failed to see and understand that this Divine manifestation of the grace and mercy of God was in any way strange or mysterious. It is not asserted that the Jews have ever realised the true greatness of the father of the faithful ; to them he was as a man among other men as highly favoured by God ; but that he was a God-inspired man, of a special type, as summing up the past and introducing a new era, it is doubtful if they ever had any clear conceptions upon this point. It is certain that they were unable to receive the thought that Jesus Christ was the Reality of whom Abraham was the type and shadow ; and when this thought was suggested to them in the words, " before Abraham was I Am," they were ready to stone Jesus for what they thought was akin to blasphemy. The transcendent truth in all

these matters is that Christ by His Spirit was in them all ; and if Christ by His Spirit, and His Own method of truth do not reveal these truths to men, it may fairly be assumed that men would fail to discover them.

The question to be raised at this point takes the following form : Should the study be carried forward from Abraham through the Bible ; or is it within the range of possibility that a long pause should be made to consider the further forms of development as contained in Genesis ? The conception arises that the study so far of this work of re-creation is in a true sense, whilst spiritual in order, an outward visible objective system of thought. The inorganic order in the Heavens and Earth was followed by the organic, the new life in the family of the Adam-Seth line. The visible is conceived as swept away by a flood ; and the life in the Seth line becomes psychic and spiritual in Noah and his sons. Again there is development in Shem and Terah, and the Seventh, the spiritual, man is Abraham. There is a break in the development ; it is not recorded that there are generations of Abraham ; there is a leap from Terah to Ishmael, and thus it is conceived that Abraham is a special end ; and the development in Ishmael may mean a new beginning. This new beginning it is conceived is with Noah ; he is the father of a new race ; he represents the spirit in the order of development in what is subjective or psychic. It may not be very easy to apprehend all that this means ; but it may be stated in this form : the series of visions in creation live and move throughout all generations ; the series Heaven and Earth to Terah follow in their order ; the series from Noah to Isaac are involved within the series that precede them, as the psychical within the physical ; and from Shem to Jacob a further series arise which synchronise with the intellectual and the moral. It might be supposed that here these series of development would terminate ; but they go on with another series, the spiritual, the order in grace and faith, and these are carried forward in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, the patriarchs of the nation of Israel. It may not be easy to apprehend what this means ; but the explanation is that in the Book of Genesis there can be traced all these series of orders of development ; and yet it is to be conceived that spiritually the development in Genesis is limited by the spiritual psychic. It may well be that this explanation will not be easily understood ; the subject is complex, and yet when the order in nature and in man are understood physically, psychically,

morally, and spiritually, it can be seen that they fit into each other, and the Bible is in harmony with nature and man.

The spiritual conception in the Noah-Isaac series is that of psychic development : man is thought upon as cut off from the past, the physically organic ; faith is now, as it were, an ingrained factor in his life, and thus the merely sensuous is out of place. The first series had their history in the visible, the objective ; the second series is based upon faith, even that great act of faith which obeyed God, built an ark, and was saved thereby. This ark is a type of one human soul, of a family of souls, or of a church ; the conception being that into this place of safety the spirit retires from the world of visible things in all its turmoils, and, in the midst of changes and destruction, all is well, the everlasting arms are around soul, family, or church. The signs and symbols used in the first series are now available for the second ; and it follows that they will agree, and be in psychic harmony, because the thoughts are derived from the visible sense images. It must follow that the psychic generations of the sons of Noah will harmonise with the physical distribution, with the races and with the actions of men ; in the same way, that which was objective becomes subjective, and this new psychic realm is formed within the soul of a man and of men. By faith Shem becomes spiritual as well as intellectual ; and the generations of Terah are those of the spiritual psychic realm in all their fulness ; in other words, by faith man has conceived Abraham, as revealed in the story of his life, his thoughts and actions ; thus Abraham, as a living seed, lives in the souls of men by faith, and it is their great privilege to desire his spirit, cherish his faith, and walk in his footsteps. Man as a possible Abraham is the psychic vision of the series beginning with Noah ; and it is at this stage that a new development takes place in the generations of Ishmael, the son of Abraham. Here the strange concept arises that it is not only Ishmael and Isaac that are the sons of faithful Abraham ; every faithful follower of Abraham is his son, his spiritual son, by the like faith in God. It is not necessary to enter into details here as to the generations of Ishmael ; they take the place of Shem in the first series ; but there is this great difference, when these are studied in history they are found to synchronise with Israel in Egypt, Moses, the great redemption, the law, and the desert. In Genesis the generations of Ishmael are summed up in the names of the princes of Ishmael ; and in this they are like Israel as twelve tribes in the nation.

There may be much that is full of interest for the student who delights in such studies in connection with the names of the sons of Ishmael; there is, however, one sign worthy of attention; it is said that their possessions were from Egypt by Shur on the way to Assyria; and this is the district where Ishmael was said to reside with Hagar his mother, and his Egyptian wife. It is not suggested that the natural, physical seed of Ishmael had their possession in this district; they have been traced in their migrations into Arabia; thus it is the spiritual Ishmael, not the physical, that requires special study.

In the generations of Isaac this second series culminates; and as it was with Terah and Abraham, so it is with Isaac and Jacob, special study is required to realise the results attained. Here it is necessary to remember that out of the chaos of the past, the flood that destroyed, there has been rescued Faith, and also Hope, because Isaac is the type of that grace, or virtue; and by regaining Faith, Hope becomes the birthright of mankind. It is not suggested that Hope came through Ishmael, for Hope stays at home; it has no desire for Egypt, the great world of men and events; it is the promises of God, and their realization, which receives the absorbing attention of Hope. With the generations of Isaac, Hope, it is different because this has to do with the fruits of Hope as they have been developed in history; thus the question may be asked, Who is it that makes Hope fruitful? To whom is this fruitfulness made the means of blessing? In other words, the psychic series receives and fulfils the physical, and the psychical becomes by this new development a fore-shadowing of the future. The seed has been seen in creation; it has lived and passed through its cycle of development from Heaven and Earth to Abraham; it has again followed the same order of development from Noah to Isaac, and thus men are becoming familiar with seed and order of development, and the prophetic spirit being thus enlightened, looks forward into the future wondering what the end will be. As the order is now fairly understood it is not necessary to dwell upon details; it will be sufficient for guidance to put the questions in their order, and note the results.

Whence the generations of Isaac? They are linked with the past through Isaac and Rebekah, Abraham and Sarah; and thus through Terah, Shem, Noah, Adam, back to God. This past is comparable to the womb of time, or rather to eternity, because time is the fruit of that womb. During time men have seen the

sons of that womb divided, separated from each other in their methods of thought, their desires and aspirations ; their pursuits have been different also, for the elder brother has been a cunning hunter of beasts and men ; the younger being peaceful, somewhat deceitful, with the innate desire, not understood, to attain to the position of the first-born ; to the inheritance and the blessing attached to it. Thus it has happened in history that both brothers have misunderstood what these things mean ; the elder brother knows that what he wants is earthly lordship, dominion, power, wealth, greatness ; the younger covets all these in the same sense ; and yet in him there is a vein of mysticism, a ray of faith, a glimpse of hope that somehow attaches deeper spiritual meaning to what is promised, although it cannot be said that this inward desire ever comes to be clearly articulated in the ears of men. In a deceitful manner the younger brother took advantage of his elder brother ; he gave up what ministered to the sensual appetite ; and for a mess of pottage, what was pleasant and gratifying to the flesh, Esau-Edom despised and sold his birthright. After this memorable event, the vision is that of famine, the Philistine country and a repetition of the experiences of Abraham with Abimelech. It is well to note the warning against going to Egypt. this is not where the faithful will find rest and peace ; the heart rests in the promises of God, and they become wells of water for refreshment and blessing. There has been much strife betwixt Philistines and shepherds about these wells ; they contain living water, and yet to men they have been sources of contention and hatred ; what fools men have been in the past, for even the rich blessings of God have caused strife and ill-will. There has been ample room for all ; when will they discover their folly, and sit down as brethren around the deep, sweet well of the faithfulness, mercy, and love of God ?

When ? After a forty years period, one of God's dispensations of grace ; then the elder brother got entangled in the meshes of the net of the worldly, sensual, Canaanite race ; the enemies of God ; the possessors of the land of the promises ; the lords of the land ; the powers sensual and carnal, that govern men in their degraded state. This was a great grief and sorrow to the household of faith and hope in the little circle at Beersheba ; and also to the faithful in the nation and land of Israel. This matter is much more serious than men appear to think ; it is not merely a question of hunger and food ; it is fraternising with the enemy



against the King; it is treachery; it is uniting with the enemy against God; it is to become subject to evil; to permit Delilah to cut the hair of consecration; and to make fetters of loving silk, strong as iron, so that there may not be any means of escape from the enemy. In a sense this must shut the door against the blessing of God; this is not to be deceived as in a moment of weakness; it is the man's life, his choice, and thus, is it so very strange, that here, in this particular matter of the redemption of mankind, those who do such things cannot find any door of repentance, no matter how deep the sorrow and regret, the bitterness and the tears? This it is to be feared cuts very deep for Esau and Israel; this is a personal sin, but it is also national; it is a terrible thing to despise the birthright; this is the step that leads to worldliness and sensuality, and thus to unfitness to receive and be the means of conveying to mankind the Blessing that is in the Seed. The result for Esau is Edom; the fall away from faith, hope, and grace; he is Adam, the fallen, perverted moral man; the serpent in wisdom; the beast and hunter without moral training; and thus in the race of life he falls short of the goal of manhood and does not come within sight of the Blessing as the means of bringing salvation to mankind. This elder brother, named Esau, it ought to be remembered, has not lived unblessed by God; his dwelling has been where there has been the fatness of plenty; the dew of Heaven from above has fallen upon his pastures in the night; and he has used the sword freely as a means of living. There have not been many signs of gratitude for such blessings thus possessed; the grudge has not been forgotten; the spirit of revenge has been cherished; and thus the strife betwixt Esau and Jacob, Edom and Israel, State and Church remain.

Why all these visions and changes in the home at Beer-Sheba. They are all working toward events of which the brothers, the parties concerned, have no conception. Separation was necessary, thus the elder departs and allies himself with Ishmael; whilst the younger, to save his life, takes his way to Haran, to his mother's people in Syria. The son that valued the birthright and esteemed the blessing to be of importance, seems to turn his back on both; and it is as a lonely, weary wanderer that he reaches Bethel, and there under the starlight heavens tries to sleep and rest after his journey. Here the Lord in His compassion, pity, and love reveals Himself to the wanderer; the doors of Heaven

are thrown wide open, a pathway of light is made radiant with glory, and the angel messengers are seen going to and returning from Heaven, on their messages of mercy to men. The vision was real and true ; but to the dreamer it seemed to be only a vision. Poor Jacob ! It was only thus the Divine Vision and Voice could reach his soul ; the separation from home and parents and the long journey had been helpful ; his spirit had been cast down within him, and it was at Bethel that, to some extent, the meaning of birthright and blessing dawned upon his soul. The Spirit of God moved upon the spirit of Jacob ; there was light and glory, heaven as light, earth as darkness ; and God, the God of Abraham and Isaac over all blessed for evermore. The voice of God re-echoed within his soul confirming the blessings promised and again renewed for mankind with the words, " I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land ; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." This is why the separation took place ; the Divine purpose was not forgotten, and it was not to be left unfulfilled. Home, ignorance, ambition, strife, fear, wandering in the day, the vision in the night of the open heaven, the angels, the Form and Voice of the Lord in Heaven, and the Spirit in the soul, these all meant to Jacob what he could never forget, for the truth in the vision was a Divine revelation.. Why this vision at Bethel to Jacob ? It is the hour of his awakening to God and truth ; the glamour of birthright by dominion and lordship was gone ; the earthliness of the Blessing was cast out ; and for the future, consciously or unconsciously, the Spirit was in him as the Spirit of promise. The story of Haran, Laban, Leah and Rachel, the handmaidens, the sons, the cattle, and wealth ; these are another version of the seed bearing seed ; the work of the Spirit in manifold ways, and all these are worthy of the most careful study.

What is the result of the home life, the vision at Bethel, and the experiences at Haran ? The picture presented is an earthly one ; it is that of a very prosperous successful man. With only his staff in hand he reached Haran, now he is very wealthy, has a numerous family, and, in every way, the blessing of God resting upon him seems to have made him so rich that he is the cause of envy and jealousy to his relations. Is he so very happy and contented with his lot ; has he no cross to bear, and no cause for complaint ? Jacob has discovered that things, possessions, families, do not

make men happy and content ; they are a trouble by day and a care by night ; and that where envy and strife dwell, and there is a jealous eye and a covetous heart, peace is impossible. Jacob seems to be somewhat thankless for the blessings obtained at his uncle's home in Syria ; but the discontent that frets his soul is a mark of grace ; it is the work of the Spirit leading him to understand that the time had come to appraise all these blessings at their true value, and that it was full time to arise and return to God, to Bethel, to the land of promise, and to the realisation, in some sense, of the promised blessings with which he was endowed. What more easy than the departure from Haran, and the journey to Palestine ? It is not quite so easy as might be supposed. Was there no indebtedness to Laban ? No claim on Laban's part, as head of the family, the father of Jacob's wives ? Jacob feared such claims, he left by stealth, and Laban angry would have pursued, overtaken and brought him back again ; the family would have remained in a form of feudal bondage, and thus the budding family would not have become the nation of Israel in later days in its deliverance under Moses from the thralldom of Egypt. There is an analogy betwixt this return from Syria and the deliverance from Egypt ; there is an intervener ; the power of the pursuer is broken ; he cannot do what he wishes ; and thus the issue is freedom and the return to the land of promise. "Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him." Are they not the ministers of God sent forth to minister to those who are the heirs of salvation ? This was God's welcome home again to the wanderer ; it was the message of peace ; and Jacob took the hint, sent off his messengers to Esau with a message of peace as a means of reconciliation. The past has sprung to life again ; birthright and blessing are remembered ; the fear of Esau is revived ; and as for Jacob, his refuge is in God. What can a man do at such a time but flee to God for safety ; the past, if not cancelled and forgiven, remains an unhealed sore. Jacob was wise, man's extremity is God's opportunity, and it is safest and best to return to Him and plead His Own promises of grace and mercy.

How is this psychic struggle brought to an issue ? Even by asking forgiveness and making restitution to an offended brother, as Jacob did to Esau, because this is the meaning of his message to my lord Esau from the servant Jacob, with a prayer for grace. But was it wise and right of Jacob to make such a confession ? Was it not the renunciation of birthright and blessing as he under-

stood them in days long past ? Yes, as he understood them in the past, because the thought might well have dawned upon the soul of Jacob, that the vision of his youth was that of earthly power and honour, but after his experiences the earthly would not be so highly prized, and something more spiritual, true, and righteous, had become his ideal. He was prepared to humble himself, to confess that he had done wrong, and thus the first step was taken for reconciliation with God and man. How can man be reconciled with God and be at peace with him ? The vision is that of two wrestlers in the dark night ; the one wrestles to overcome, the other wrestles to be overcome. It is a contest of wills ; of spiritual power and supremacy. Man has to be taught how to wrestle ; the Spirit helpeth man's infirmities ; he cannot pray as he ought ; and thus the strange conception of frail man being strengthened by his opponent, his nearest, truest Friend, who desires to bless, and yet cannot do so until the blessing is asked for, and the puny wrestler made truly anxious to obtain that which the Spirit is wrestling to bestow. The will of man ought to coincide with the Will of God ; if these agree and harmonise there is light and peace ; but if they run contrary, then it is a problem of the most complex kind for man to consider, How can man be saved and find forgiveness and peace ? This is not a metaphysical problem of a transcendental kind ; it is practical, experimental, and psychical ; and the answer is not merely given in words through Jacob at the ford Jabbok ; for men may look on and see the struggle ; they may enter into the wrestling with the Spirit, and thus attain the same results. When men are prepared to forgive, and ask forgiveness, they are on the way to be forgiven. When all men are forgiven by God, and find peace, then the day for peace on earth and forgiveness will have come ; a portion of the land of promise will be possessed, and there will be a true altar and sacrifice to consecrate what is possessed. But, let men beware, and read carefully the sad story of the defilement of Dinah ; the evil influence of the Hivite prince, and the consequences. The seed of Israel and of the Hivite cannot unite and become fruitful for blessing. This is the story of sin and its results : " The carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The story of Simeon and Levi, and the revenge they took upon the Hivites of Shechem, ought not to be overlooked ; this is how the miscarriage of justice, the seduction of truth, and the defilement of what is good and pure ends ; there is

revolt and scheming for revenge, and the end is strife, ill-will, and murder. In all these glimpses into the story of the return of Jacob to the land of promise, men may trace how events take place in history ; they are not uncaused and without meaning, there is order, cause and effect may be traced, and this is the inductive method of science.

Who ? To Whom ? For whom ? These seem to be the questions which arise under the heading of the moral nature of man. It is true that in this story of the generations of Isaac the realm is psychic and empiric, prophetic, and fore-shadowing, and thus it is necessary to read the story with the eyes fixed upon the future, as well as on the past, so that whence and whether may be linked together. Outside the land of promise the conception of Bethel—the House of God—is not recognised ; it is within the land that altar and sacrifice are acceptable to God ; and the sacred place to Jacob is Bethel. It is within the moral nature that God is known and worshipped in spirit and in truth ; the mere intellectual, or empiric experience of the ways of God, as knowledge, is of no avail ; it is the heart, with all the fulness accompanying that word in its moral meaning, that is of chief importance. It is not meet that men should strive about sacred places ; to Jacob and to Israel it was Bethel ; to the Jews Jerusalem ; to Christians of one class the Church ; but in reality to all true worshippers the very shrine within which God dwells by his Spirit is the heart of man. It is not because a man worships at Bethel, Jerusalem, Rome, in a cathedral, or in a Bethel chapel, that his worship is acceptable ; it is because through these, in manifold ways, the light of truth, goodness, grace, and love find their way into the soul of man ; these are only the coloured glass that refracts and re-refracts the light from heaven ; the all-important matter is light responding to Light, goodness to the Good, graciousness to Grace, and love to Love. If men could only get out of the habit of studying their glass windows, and the means by which the light of truth reaches their souls ; then this diffraction of conceptions would surely pass away ; because, it must be true that reasonable moral beings know that the virtue is not in the glass, it becomes a medium for refraction, and the greater the angle of refraction the less light, and the greater the increase of darkness. In the light of modern science this is the reply to the claims of holy places and things ; they may be more or less permissible under varied conditions ; but the sooner they can be removed

the better ; they are helps to infants and children ; but men would desire to break through them, and thus see truth, goodness, grace, and love, face to face. Is not this the meaning of the death of Deborah, the nurse ? Her work is ended, and she is no longer required. Is it not also the meaning of the change of name from Jacob to Israel ; from childhood to princehood ? The man is now raised to manhood ; he is a king of a race of kings ; and by him kings shall reign, and nations become just and righteous. This is something like the prophetic vision as bearing upon Israel and the world, but the end is not yet ; the very heart of this subject has to be touched, and the picture is one of the most touching in the story of the life of Jacob. The end of the journey has not been reached ; the travellers are very near Ephratah—Bethlehem—the travail pangs come upon Rachel ; the babe is born and the mother dies. To Rachel this child is “ The son of her sorrow, Benoni,” but Israel named him the son of the right hand—Benjamin. Travellers on life’s highway may still see the stone that marks the place where the remains of the much-loved Rachel were laid to rest ; can they also discern that here the Prince of Life was born, the Son at the Right Hand of power ; and that soon after, Israel, as a church visible, passed away from among men ? These two events seem to be linked together ; the psychic conception is in the story of Jacob’s return to the land of promise ; the intellectual and moral in the coming of Christ ; the fall of Jerusalem, and the coming of the spiritual kingdom of grace and truth. Linked with the story of Rachel, as happening near that period, there comes into view that sinful story about Reuben and Bilhah ; that the offence was very great in the eyes of Jacob is clearly seen, because, in the blessings uttered upon his sons and the tribes of Israel, there is no blessing for Reuben, he is disinherited and disgraced ; he ought to have been the heritor of strength, power, dignity, and moral excellency ; but he was unstable, fickle, weak, and lacking in moral dignity, therefore he was unfit to rule over his brethren, or possess the power of governing. Here also the vision of the future is cast upon the Jewish nation ; with the privileges that the Jews had enjoyed they ought to have remained the first among the nations ; the end was disinheritance under the Romans and dispersion among the nations. The family develops into the nation, the return is to Hebron, or Mamre, the cycle is at an end ; Isaac dies ; his sons bury him, and the generations live on, passing from the

sight of men to be followed by other generations in their order. It is not necessary to explain in what way this series of generations from Noah to Isaac synchronise with the days in creation ; to the generations Heaven and Earth to Terah ; and, to the visions of faith in Abraham. The same story is more fully elaborated under new conditions, in new forms ; and in Isaac's generations there is the summation, in moral manhood, of the problem of salvation in Esau and Jacob ; in the experiences of Jacob at Bethel and Haran ; and in the return to the land of promise. The creation series reveals man ; the Heaven and Earth series the Fall of man and his re-creation by faith in Abraham, the man, the friend of God ; in this series as the result of Faith there is inborn into the race of men Hope ; in this Noah-Isaac series, Hope lives in the generations of Isaac, and through or by the mighty work of the Spirit in Jacob, there is the manifestation of the Patience of God as developed in man, in changing the deceitful, wayward, covetous Jacob into the man of prayer and patience as Israel the prince with God. There is also the prophetic conception of the land as possessed by Isaac, who leaves it not ; and the repossessing of the land by Jacob after his exile in foreign lands. This vision may extend to Israel and the redemption from Egypt ; or still further to the vision of the Restoration under Cyrus by Ezra, the issue being the birth of Christ, the invasion of the Romans, the burning of the temple at Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews.

Following this conception of the method of revelation contained in the Book of Genesis, it is necessary to return to the next series of generations, as recorded from Shem to Jacob. In the natural order of development the thoughts follow this order :— (1) Creation ; (2) Re-creation, as in physical forms ; (3) The inward generation in psychic thought developing to empiricism ; (4) The intellectual study or moral re-generation as conceivable within the psychic realm, but as seeking to apprehend the relations and the moral meanings that are involved in the stories in the generations. The ground-work is intellectual, and thus in Genesis the generations of Shem do not throw much light upon the pathway ; they indicate whence the series arise, and by inductive study men trace their steps backward from Terah to Shem, Shem to Noah and the Flood ; and from Noah to Seth, Adam, and God. As a question of moral life, as an organic revelation, the thoughts rest upon Terah ; they glance

at Nahor, Haran, and Lot, and the real study begins with Abraham, the man endowed with faith, the man found among men in the likeness of God. But is there anything new to be found in the life of Abraham as viewed physically, or objectively, as psychically, and as morally ? In the first instance man is seeking for an object, a man in the likeness of God ; in the second his thoughts psychic are to find out whether the subject, the soul of man, is like the object, Abraham ; and, in the third, the assumption being that they do not agree and harmonise, is Abraham a moral ideal to be imitated, so that likeness to him may be attained ? In other words, if a man takes Abraham (or Christ) as his model in life, dividing what is chaotic from what is firm and abiding, will the result be within the soul of man, Heaven, or what this word represents ? With the question Why ? as the thoughts are turned upon the generations of Ishmael the thoughts turn not to the natural son of Abraham by Hagar, but to the spiritual seed, to Egypt, Moses, Israel, the bondage ; the separation and deliverance from Egypt, and all that is recorded about Israel during the forty years of the wandering. Here the Spirit is seen in His mighty works ; and the third day in creation, or salvation from the Flood, are but candle-light as compared with electric-light. The details, the order, the seed bearing seed are all there ; they are signs and symbols, not of earthly forms, but heavenly and divine, seeing that they are made from the patterns seen by Moses in the Mount of God. With the question, What do these things mean and to what issue do they tend ? then the vision is turned to Isaac in the land ; to Jacob ; the Conquest ; the tribes as a nation and kingdom ; and to those far-off events from which only a few rays of light have risen upon the sons of men. With the question as to How such events are to be fulfilled ? it seems strange to turn to the generations of Esau, and to suppose that any light could be thrown upon this subject from such a source. But, spiritually, it is here that men would be likely to go astray ; they have pre-conceptions ; and thus it is not easy to surmount these, and conceive it to be possible that, what God means in revelation, and what man may learn from the revelation, may be very different conceptions. The place in order for Esau in this series of generations is the fifth ; thus Shem, Ishmael, and Esau synchronise in their varied series. Shem's generations are names ; the generations of Ishmael are names ; and the generations of Esau are names with such titles as dukes and kings. Where



secular history is profuse in details, sacred history makes no comments ; where secular history has many names, and will scarcely mention the Name above all names, the sacred history is more generous, it records many names ; and it may well be that all these names have their spiritual meaning. This is a subject that ought to give intense pleasure to genealogists who wish to follow the spiritual history of this race of the sons of Edom ; it is not without meaning ; but men do not seem to be prepared to undertake this special study. Whence this race of Edom ? The descent is known ; he is the elder brother of Jacob ; they are the twin sons of Isaac ; and from Isaac by Abraham to Adam and God, the genealogy can be traced. But the man despised his birthright and lost the Blessing, thus at this stage of history it is stated that he separated himself from Jacob and Canaan, and with his wives and children, cattle and substance, he migrated to the land of Edom to get away from his brother Jacob. This seems to be the old story of light and darkness, good and evil, day and night ; they separate because they cannot agree. It is not necessary to impute forms of evil against Esau ; his great sin is negation ; the man is not religious or superstitious, he is darkness, because the light of life is not permitted to permeate his soul. Ethically, Esau might compare favourably with Jacob, intellectually be his superior, and empirically a wiser man ; but he lacked the mystic spiritual life that looks beyond intellect and ethics, and thus his failure to inherit faith, the promises, and the hope of the life eternal. The man is a failure ; he is Adam in history ; the earthly and the sensuous ; the intellectual power and earthly dominion over others is enough for Esau, he asks no more ; it is self versus God ; and it is self never rising to manhood in the knowledge, fear, and love of God. When will the man reach the ideal, Heaven ? This troubles him not. Ought not a man to be satisfied with Adah the Hittite, Aholibamah the Hivite, and Bashemath the sister of Nebajoth, the daughter of Ishmael ? Again, consider his sons and daughters, cattle and substance, Edom and Seir ; these are enough, surely, for any man ; and if they do well, are they not a goodly inheritance to enjoy ? Further, why should Esau fret and become discontented, if all his children become dukes ; all take the first place, and all reflect their glory upon their parents ? What trouble in life can such a man have ? Tell it not to others ; there is Seir the Horite and his family ; there are the deep sorrows

and troubles of the heart not named to wife or child ; somehow the curses about balance the blessings even with a prosperous man ; and thus if the sun seems to shine in the heavens and men say it is day and light, within the soul it is night and darkness, and there is no prospect, no hope for the future. How glorious the thought, the glory of Edom does not end with dukes ; there is a line of kings also, of knowing men, who write their names in history. Who cares for such honours as dukedoms, kingdoms, popedoms, and other earthly doms, in the long run, if these honours perish with the names, as if written upon the sand on the sea-shore, and Jacob receives the inheritance and resides in it ; finds the Blessing and is blessed by it ; and through that Blessing becomes the means of blessing to the whole earth ? Poor Esau ! and much to be pitied earthly great men ; this is the Master's question to all : "What is a man benefited if he gain the whole world and lose his soul ?"

"These are the generations of Jacob-Joseph." "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children." The key-note is love, and it is by this note that the whole story is to be interpreted. Whence this divine love of Jacob to Rachel and to Joseph, natural love as men might say ? Trace it backward in time and history and where can it come from, but from the very heart of God. It is love that makes the difference betwixt a good and bad shepherd. If the man loves his sheep he will care for them with the devotion of love ; if for the day's wage, then the hiring cares more for himself than for the sheep and the results are sometimes unsatisfactory. Love has strange mystic powers which worldly people cannot comprehend ; it is to those who love that happy, wise, far-seeing dreams come ; the angels in the night whisper their tales to those who love ; they are delighted with what they hear and they run and tell their friends what the angels told them thinking that others also will be pleased with the stories. Alas ! alas ! it is not so, they find to their cost that their practical brothers scorn dreamers ; and that they have no love to spare for the one the father loves best. The old story again, the chaos and darkness of the past ; the moving of the Spirit in love ; the light of love enlightening a soul ; dreams of the night of light and dark ; the closing day of light and love at home and the night in the deep pit ; Egypt and bondage. When love leaves the home, the family circle, then what will the result be ? The answer is given in the strange story of Judah, his friend

Hirah, his wife Shuah, the Canaanite ; the three sons, Er, Onan, and Shelah ; the wife of Er, Tamar, and the results of that unhappy union. Men might well wonder why such a story is found in the Bible ; and question whether it may not do more harm than good. Can the meaning be now discerned ; and is this where an explanation may be found as to the purpose of the story, and why it is found just here in the sacred record ? Is it Judah only that is held up to be execrated before men, and the brand of shame to be placed upon his forehead ? May it not carry a message about the nation and its Canaanitish entanglements and subsequent idolatries and iniquities ? Has it been altogether useless as a beacon of warning to warn men and women against what degrades love, turning it into lust ? It is Judah the fourth son of Jacob that is thus branded as immoral ; it is Judah that rules in Jerusalem ; it is the heart of man that is signified in Canaanite and Judah ; and where love should reign in purity there lust, hatred and evil are rampant. When this kind of thing is found to exist in a family or nation, or during time among the nations of the earth, let men beware, for the fountains of life have become impure and unclean ; the love of God is not there, and the God of love cannot dwell in such places. Why was Joseph sold by his brethren, carried down to Egypt and made a slave in the house of Potiphar ? Why indeed ? It is amidst such visions that men trace the dawning of the Love Divine, as revealed by the Spirit ; it is the mystery of humiliation, temptation, misrepresentation, and of punishment as an evil-doer. There was One who entered this world as a servant, who was tempted and did not sin ; who felt as if the earth was a prison ; and in that lowly state He interpreted the thoughts, the dreams of men in a wonderful manner. To those whose prospect was life He told them the meaning of their dreams ; to those whose doom was death He gave the sure meaning of their dreams also ; the Love Divine illumined His soul and thus to Him the seed bearing seed according to their kind were all known. What made the difference betwixt that strange young prisoner and other men ? About this matter there ought not to be two opinions ; even Pharoah could discern the truth that the " Spirit of God " was in him, and by the Spirit he was able to interpret the king's dreams. What do the dreams of men mean, only corn or no corn, famine for food or plenty of food ? Surely much more, for this is a spiritual vision rising to moral issues and thus

it must go deeper, or the shadow will cover the substance that causes the shadow. Perhaps it is unwise to try too intently to pierce the shadow, to reach the substance and the light shining upon it ; yet it is well to remember the fact that it is the living who hunger for food, for the dead feel no hunger, and thus plenty and famine are alike to them. The vision from creation onward is that sun, moon, and stars shine and give light to the earth ; and they are given for day and night, months, and years, to govern and measure, by standards of thought and life which transcend the conceptions of men. The truth, therefore, becomes plain, the masses of humanity are helpless ; plenty or famine is their varying lot ; thus it is a matter for gratitude and thankfulness, that the One Man above all men watches over their interests, blessing them in the days of plenty and supplying their wants in the days of famine. If it is asked how all these things are to be traced in history, and by what means men will come to understand what is above the physical order ; then the thoughts are turned away from Egypt and the great world to the family of God, to those who inherit the promises. It is so that they also are involved with their brethren of mankind in prosperity and adversity, in plenty and famine ; and it is true that they also are ignorant of the causes which bring about these conditions. If the prodigal son had continued to enjoy plenty he would not have troubled his mind about home and his father ; it was the pinch of hunger, and degradation to the swine-trough that brought reflection and the wise resolve to arise and return home ; and it may well be that these base experiences of life are of great value, when they lead men to think upon the past, to feel the shame of the present, and to look forward to the future. Men cannot live on promises, they need bread ; and if there is no bread then the issue is death. But how does this apply to Joseph, his father and his brothers ? The interpretation is found in his own words, " Ye thought evil against me ; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day to save much people alive." If those who inherit the promises of God would open their eyes to divine truth, would they not perceive that before the days of plenty or famine, the Son of God came to this earth, was in it, saved it ; that He is the very Life and Bread of it ; and it is because He lives that they live also ; and in Him all the races of men are blessed and live. The difficulty is to recognise Him behind all that He does ; and, the story of Joseph and his

brethren in Egypt, at their successive visits, are meant to touch the hearts of men so that they may be able through their tears to see the form of one greater than Joseph, even Jesus, the Saviour of the world. Who is it then that is the Reality behind all these changing forms of human life and manifold experiences? It is the Well-Beloved Son of the Father in Heaven, who in the strangest possible way becomes a Father to His father, and the Saviour of His brethren. Before Him the brethren bow as lowly servants; and the sun, moon and stars in their courses make obeisance to Him. He is the Lord over the whole earth as represented by Egypt; He is the Sustainer of those who have received the promises of God; and it is by Him that they are blessed and kept in the world. This Man is unique; who can be compared with Him? There is no comparison as betwixt Joseph and Christ. What men perceive is the passing shadow of the King and Lord, and thus they can only say if the shadow has revealed so much of His gentleness, patience, wisdom, grace, truth, righteousness and divine love, what must He be in His glory as the Son of God and the Saviour of the World? Whither does the story of Joseph lead men? It points through Jacob and the blessings on the sons to the death of Jacob and burial at Machpelah; the death of Joseph, the embalmment of his body, and the promise as to future events to the fulfilment of God's promises through the nation of Israel, for the whole world.

## CHAPTER III.

### EGYPT, THE NATION AND THE DESERT.

The Beatitudes uttered by Christ in conjunction with the story of creation gives to men the key to the revelation contained in the Bible. That key is a spiritual living power, and thus it must not be used in a mechanical form as fitting only one lock or mystery ; the key in a spiritual manner has to be applied to all mysteries in their spiritual order of development ; thus it is implied that a spiritual mind is required to apply the spiritual key, and that without the teaching of the Spirit the locks must remain closed, the mysteries unsolved. There seems to be no issue in any other direction ; if natural students will study the Bible by natural means and standards, then the Book will, to them, remain a natural product ; but if the study is spiritual, then the results will be of the Spirit and spiritual. By applying this key, as the method of Christ, to the ten generations in Genesis, it has been found that the first series of six end in Abraham the father of the faithful and the friend of God ; a man who, in a mysterious way, in an age of gross darkness and idolatry, suddenly flashes forth in the light of truth as a man like God. This man embodies in himself, in a special manner, that link which unites heaven and earth, and the name of that link is Faith. The second series of six generations, Noah to Isaac, carries the mystic work of God another stage forward, and the issue is the possession of that which was promised, the Land ; and this possession, even though it be only that of a burying place, a grave, embodies in it that which is so precious to man, for the future, an assured Hope. The third series, Shem to Jacob, is built upon Faith and Hope in this sense that there has been seen among men one altogether unworthy to inherit the land promised or the blessing bestowed ; but through faith and hope, by the special guidance of God, the Spirit, and the varied experiences of life,

there was inwrought into that man the grace of patience, and thus he was changed from Jacob into Israel. It is by faith and a long-lived hope that patience is achieved ; and hope dies not until the great work of patience has been achieved. All this is spiritual truth, it is fact and allegory, but the fruition of faith, hope, and patience is found in love ; and it is Divine Love that is revealed in Joseph the son of Jacob. The Spirit of God seems to suggest the thought that the end of Faith is Love ; but that the onward stages should be studied in the order of the work of the Spirit by development in Faith, Hope, Patience, and Love. It will be sufficient to state here that this is found to be in the Bible the ever-recurring work of the Spirit in men, nations, or dispensations ; and this, as a subjective series of works of grace, is as uniform in its operations as the objective order of development that is to be found in the method of Christ.

The method of Christ, in the three series of generations referred to, it may be observed, proceeds by the omission of two generations and the adding of two generations in each series. The generations can be studied differently in their order, as from one to ten consecutively ; but, with this line of study, it may be found that the order is more that of the Kingdom of God as a whole, than of the method of Christ as revealing the complex order of development. The other order of study is like the symbol in the vision of Ezekiel ; there are the wheels within wheels, cycles within cycles, with the living Spirit in the wheels ; the rings are high and dreadful to behold, and they are full of eyes round about. It is true that development can be conceived as one and continuous ; but it is equally true that there are new beginnings, and that these are also continuous in their order of development. The thought conceived here is that in Genesis there is to be found creation ; and arising out of creation, following the same order, there is the new creation in a visible series which, so to speak, gives physical form ; a series psychical in subjective order ; and a series intellectual and moral in which man is found reasoning upon and trying to conform to this new creation as it is being manifested in the midst of the race of mankind. If this is clearly understood, then it will be seen that six principles have been involved into the new creation ; and that the series of developments, in a certain sense, are the germ seeds of the realm of Grace in history down to Christ. It may be conceived that these three are correlated with the dispensations of Grace in history,

and thus they may prove useful in the study of the nations in past ages. The point now reached may require a little study; in the book of Genesis, the beginnings and germs of history can go no further. The moral manhood has been reached in four forms; in the ideal creation and man in the likeness of God; in the new creation and Abraham in God's image; in the son Isaac, the inheritor, as well as the promised Seed in the promised land; and, again, in that well-beloved son, Joseph, the Saviour of Egypt and of his brethren, the Saviour of the World. This teaching is line upon line, here a little and there a little, and thus it is strange that the students of the Bible in the past have not seen these truths in their order of development. Salvation, it is to be observed, is not to be attained by moral means, not even within the Kingdom of Grace; the end is Egypt, the world, bondage. This is where the Book of Genesis leaves Israel; in other words, even though Shem, the intellect, a spiritual power, begins the series; from this starting-point of much vaunted knowledge by the reason there is no salvation from sin. How could men expect any other result? Is not this the vantage ground of the serpent, and has he not reigned therein, subjecting men to his devilish wiles, by ever luring them onward to find the desires of their hearts in knowledge, the knowledge of good and evil?

Thus it is necessary here to return once more upon this pathway so often trod, and inquire what more is required, and where the Way of Life is to be found in this most wonderful Book. It is useless to go forward among other travellers on the pilgrim path, saying that if we are in the way, we are in; and that those who came in at the beginning of the way do not seem to possess any advantages over those who break into the way at any point they find convenient. It is clear that the way of life is not a chaos; it is definite order, and that order ought to be studied. There is another beginning, not specially noted as a beginning in Genesis; there is no sign-post set up stating that this is the way, and the only way to Mount Zion. It is a strange thought that the three ways mentioned all seem to meet at the same junction; but men travel by different roads, calling them by different names, and thus they do not understand each other. Every traveller heavenward thinks, by his landmarks, that he is in the way, but he may be doubtful about others, seeing the names of the landmarks differ, as their thoughts and languages



differ. The truth in plain language is simply this, a new *gracious* spiritual order and way of life begins in Abraham ; he is the fruit and a root of the tree of life ; fruit as the fulfilment of the first series ; and, as the man in the image of God by faith, the root of the gracious Kingdom of God by faith in Christ. Abraham saw Christ's day and was glad ; it is here that the fourth series begins ; and, as will be seen, the gracious life in Abraham, by faith, in due time, bursts the bonds of Egypt, and there is a new departure from Egypt to seek a better land. Here again the key of the Beatitudes, and Creation, may be used to illustrate this new spiritual creation in grace. Whence came that poorness of spirit, that lack of self-assertion, so noticeable in the life of Abraham ? Even from his faith ; his faith was rooted in God, the Spirit moved his life, gave him the light of truth, and delivered him from darkness and night. When did Isaac find comfort from sorrow ? When he was united with Rebecca and in a world of separations he found a fulfilment of the promises and a heavenly inheritance. Why was Jacob changed to be meek of spirit and endowed with inheritance and blessing ? Even that he might be a permanent revelation to men of the way the Spirit separates those who differ ; and by family and nation reveals to men the seed-bearing seed. What was Joseph in his life, in his love of truth and righteousness ? An example, that men might see there lived in him, by the Spirit, truth, purity, wisdom ; and that these were to him and to the generations of men, like sun, moon, and stars in the heavens, as the divine powers that ruled the world. It is by such thoughts as these that men are led to see that the spiritual realm of grace, in a limited sense, begins in Abraham ; as a matter of course, the real Seed, Root, and Tree is Christ, but it is in this way that men are taught lesson by lesson what they could not otherwise comprehend.

The Book of Exodus is the story of the going forth of Israel from Egypt ; it contains the record of the great redemption of the Jewish people from a tyrannic bondage ; it may be said to be the birth of the nation from the earthly womb within which it had been developed ; and also that it is the revelation of the special intervention of God for the deliverance of His first-born son, as expressed in varied forms in the Bible. In the light of the Beatitudes this is the great day of the manifestation of the power and the mercy of God upon the earth ; upon Egypt power and judgment ; and upon Israel mercy and deliverance. This

is the fifth power in nature and man, the intellect and its manifestations ; and it is the fuller revelation of the generations of Ishmael, the Son of Abraham by Hagar. As the generations of Ishmael, the four books, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, have their order of development ; they require careful study, and the result of that study is likely to be the conviction that these books form one organic realm of thought of a unique kind. It may be suggested here that the work of the Spirit can be clearly traced in these books in their order : Exodus reveals faith, as the power for redemption ; Leviticus, hope by sacrifice, cleansing, fasts and feasts ; Numbers, patience through the manifold sins and offences of the forty years wandering ; and Deuteronomy, the love of God as the law of life for men. It is not necessary to enter into details and to point out the method of Christ in these books, in their ever-recurring order ; it may be enough to state that these have been, and can be, traced ; the intellectual order exists ; scientific induction by the reason is possible ; and it is to be expected that if theologians will give the same patient study to the Bible in its order, as physical scientists have done to what is physical, they also will be able to rejoice in the gracious wonderful works of God, which transcend and illuminate all that is lower in the order of development. It is sufficient to state that this work of scientific arrangement has been attempted ; the purpose in view here is not to study or to try to reach the science in the Bible by the method of Christ, but to apply that method to history as found in the Bible.

The conception at this stage of the study of the Bible as a history of the Kingdom of Grace takes this form ; the Book of Genesis, as a seed-bed of truth and history is that of experience, and empiric in its form ; thus, although it deals with what is physical, psychical, moral, and spiritual, it only does so in a child-like way ; it does not take up intellectual problems and deal with them in scientific order, or place them in an order capable of scientific definition. It is not meant that the books when written were accepted in this sense ; because it must be remembered that men do not out-run God in His revelations of Grace, they follow on far behind, not even suspecting the deep things of God that is being revealed before their eyes. It is like this in the four books of Egypt and the Desert ; the people live in a realm hardly divided from Egypt. Moses alone is the prophet of God, the Seer ; and it was only through the learning

and wisdom of Egypt, and the traditions of his own people, that he was raised upon a platform above them ; in fact, he was specially called by God even from the womb ; he was trained in the court of Egypt for a great mission ; faith was inborn into his being ; hope was generated in his soul to be the redeemer of his people from their bondage ; the forty years' training as a shepherd made the man patient for faithful service ; and at the end of another forty years that patience having fulfilled its mission in guiding Israel in the desert, his end was peace, light, law, and love. From Pisgah he was able to view the land of promise in all its length and breadth ; and the man's work being over, the Lord gave him the kiss of benediction, and the breath of the life eternal ; he was not ; God had taken him home, and the angels found a resting place for the body of the man Moses, so wonderfully drawn out of the waters, that he might become the lawgiver and guide to Israel.

Genesis is the seed-bed of history secular and spiritual ; it is the womb within which the germs of history take form, and thus it may be well to note the fact that it is only as germinal that the book should be studied. Groping after truth in the way men must, it is inevitable that they will, in the course of enquiry, read into Genesis their conceptions of what is in the Bible in later stages of development ; but the real issue at last takes this form of enquiry : What are the relations that exist betwixt Genesis and the rest of the Bible ? As pointed out, the result of studying the Book of Genesis, in the light of the method of Christ, is that there is a fourfold development which corresponds with the physical, psychical, moral, and spiritual realms of truth ; these all find their end in remarkable men ; and these men are the spiritual concepts of a spiritual revelation. It is clear that further development in this direction is not to be found ; what men require is not further revelations as to a mystical spiritual life in the womb of time ; but, how is this child of the womb and of the dark night to be made manifest in the earth ? If this conception is understood, then the meaning of the four books of Egypt and the Desert may not be difficult to grasp ; they may be compared to the spiritual birth of a spiritual child, and that child carries with it, as imprinted within its nature, the features of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. But, what seems strange at the first glance is that this child is the first-born son of Abraham, even Ishmael, and thus although the seed is in Genesis, in that

spiritual womb of time, the child is born in Egypt and carried away into the Desert under Moses. This is a familiar line of thought, but what has not been clearly realised is this : that the development to be traced in the Bible must now follow the generations of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob. It is remarkable that in Genesis there is no such beginning in the usual form as : These are the generations of Abraham. The sixth is Terah ; the seventh Ishmael, and Ishmael as the son of Abraham. As there are no generations in creation ; so it is assumed there are no generations in the new creation in Abraham ; this is Divine, it is Grace and Faith ; thus a spiritual work of God to be kept separate from the old creation, the issue of which was Adam.

If these thoughts are understood, then it may not be so very difficult to grasp the teaching that is embodied in the four books now under consideration. The conception may be that of a child, or of a nation ; they come to the same issue, because spiritually the quest is to find one Man ; and that Man is to be found in the nation. It is the problem of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm, if the one is understood the other will reflect its image and likeness ; and face to face they will be in perfect harmony. Exodus is another much larger edition of the life of Abraham, and the key word to the book is Faith. Leviticus is to be read as an enlarged extension of the life of Isaac, and the key given is Hope. Numbers is to be studied with the eye fixed on Jacob, and the keynote is Patience. The Book of Deuteronomy is to be allowed to permeate the soul with divine mystic power, not grovelling on the earth, but soaring in the heavens, and the spirit, is with Joseph, the music being that of Divine Love. Viewed from another standpoint, the development is that of creation and re-creation ; of the physical, psychical, moral, and spiritual realms in their order. Here it is necessary to remember that in this study the spirit must rise above mere forms and types ; it is not dead things that are being studied, but living spiritual truths ; and thus the form is ever being changed and enlarged whilst the order, or the method, remains the same.

Whilst conceiving that in these spiritual generations of Ishmael there is a correspondence with all preceding generations, it must not be overlooked that they begin from a different and a lower standpoint than the successive developments to the spiritual ascending in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The generations

are new in their kind ; they begin in the great world of mankind : they are intellectual ; they are of Ishmael ; and thus they are a kind of pre-scientific enquiry, or intellectual reasoning, upon all those matters referring to salvation, deliverance, the new life and its sustenance, and all that would specially occupy the attention of wise men interested in the affairs of a nation, and the religious problems existent at the time the books were written. The question to be solved in this redemption from Egypt is not that of true spiritual religion, or of the righteous laws of a nation, it is a revelation suitable for the child Ishmael, and the nation of the children of Israel, as a means of training, of preparation, during the period of nonage in the Desert. This form of the revelation is fully explained in the visible order ; the spoken and written Commandments, and the special negative warning form which the Commandments take. In Exodus these forms are external and physical ; in Leviticus, as in consecration, the offering of strange fire, the clean and unclean, atonement, life, feasts, gladness, a jubilee to come, disobedience, and vows ; all these in their nature are psychic, rising above what is said or written. With history, in Numbers, the problem is much more complex, because it deals with the numbering of the people, motives, lusts, envy, jealousy, order, government, rebellion, priests, rulers, journeyings, inheritances. As it might be conceived that the words, "Thou shalt not" would under higher conditions pass away as motives for obedience, so the whole of the priestly and sacerdotal system of worship and the government of Moses as law-giver and judge would also give place to a higher order in the nation. Ishmaelism in its generations, or Mosaism in its institutions, do not represent the Divine order of things in heaven, or what they ought to be on the earth ; they were not meant to live for ever ; they are not the inheritance promised to Abraham, and they are not the precious promises in Isaac. They were never meant to represent the ideal that is spiritual ; they are what men required ; what they were able to receive ; and all that can be said is that the best the world possessed at that time was used by the Spirit of God, through Moses, for the instruction of mankind in truth, righteousness, and religion. It is in the Book of Deuteronomy that Moses rises above negatives, forms, signs, symbols ; the moral is changed into the spiritual, and the positive commandment in love is uttered by a man.

The thought may be expressed here that the intellect of man,

in its operations, may be represented in four ways. In the first it is serpent-like in form, it doubts and denies ; in the second there is experience and common sense rising up to empiricism through visible forms ; in the third there is faith, as obedient to the Will of God through revelation, the seeking truly to know and do His Will ; and in the fourth the issue is pure scientific truth, inductive and deductive, in perfect harmony with the Will of God. The child of the desert, Ishmael, is a mere lad ; what he sees, thinks about, and reasons upon, is the visible forms and experiences of the earthly life, with the glow of the gloaming of the past in tradition cast upon his pathway ; he thinks that what he sees is something true, real, and abiding ; it has not for a moment occurred to him that the shadows around are mere changing forms, and that there is nothing in them permanent and abiding.

In advancing upon this journey it is important to keep the pathway clear over the portion surveyed ; and the frequent re-treading of the path may not be without value if this tends to keep the pathway clear, and easier for those who, in the future, may wish to travel by this somewhat intricate pathway. The root conception is that this is a true living, spiritual road upon which men are privileged to travel ; that it is organised in a sense similar to the great creation of physical life ; and that of necessity the order the thoughts are compelled to follow is that of biology and kindred sciences. The light cast upon this road is Divine ; it is beyond the reach of men ; the sun of grace, righteousness, and truth is Christ, and apart from Him all is darkness and death. The life in God made manifest by creation is through Christ, as the Word of Life, by the Spirit of Life, and the issue is man, the living likeness of God. That life was forfeit through sin, and the fruit was death. The series of generations Heaven and Earth to Terah follow the order of creation as the re-creation in the new gracious life in Christ, and the visible issue by faith is Abraham, the friend of God. This is comparable to the living physical form of man ; it is objective to study ; it is the vision for the little child. From Noah to Isaac the series of generations are those of psychic life, the issue being the gentle Isaac, as a hope inborn in the soul ; the life promised is possessed ; but without special explanation how entered upon, unless the light is cast upon Mount Moriah, and that fiery baptism of agony and death which surrounded the sacrificial wood and altar, and the substitute provided by God. Isaac lives on ; Hope dies not ; Esau and Jacob, Edom and Israel, inherit-

ance and blessing, wandering and the return of the wanderers, as a family, a nation, takes place ; patience has been inworked into Jacob, and he has become Israel ; the Divine Son of the Right Hand lives ; Hope, the shadow, dissolves and passes away in the light of day, and the Hope of the world lives in Jesus Christ. From Shem to Jacob the series of generations are contemplated as intellectual and moral germinally ; and the issue is Joseph in Egypt ; the true revealer of the Will of God, of His purpose of Grace, and the moral ruler over the world ; the surroundings are earthly and temporal, but the vision is spiritual and universal. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph are in the womb of time, the first fruits of this new creation in Christ. The problem is that of development by involution, even as the babe in the womb is an involution and also a development. The result of reasoning here seems to be that the involution is summed up in the ultimate name Life. This is reality ; men believe this ; they cannot deny the fact, and there the matter rests.

When the living seed is made manifest in the living child, then, of necessity, the attitude of study is changed ; it is not how the seed became a child ; but what is to be done with the child in its helpless condition ; and how is it to be nourished, educated, trained, and prepared for that inheritance of which it is the heir ? In very plain language Moses is nurse, teacher, governor and the spiritual instructor of this child, Israel ; he is so by no choice of man, and certainly not by his own choice, will or wisdom. At his birth he was doomed to death, and yet God made the man that doomed his death, his preserver ; and the means by which he was taught and trained, and spiritually educated, was Pharaoh's daughter, the state of Egypt, and the priests with their culture and wisdom. In fact the child Moses was cast into the lap of mother Egypt, and trained there for forty years, in the same sense, and in the same way as the child Israel was cast into the lap of the great Desert, and Moses was made the nurse, father and mother of this wayward child. This is the very thought that burdened his soul at Taberah. Outside were the people weeping like infants, lusting and crying, " Who will give us flesh to eat ? " Whilst Moses in his agony is compelled to cry out, " Have I conceived all this people ? Have I begotten them, that Thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the suckling child, unto the land which Thou swarest unto their fathers." ... " I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is

too heavy for me. And if Thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray Thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in Thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness." This picture of the indomitable, brave, faithful, hopeful, patient Moses is a great revelation of a truth too deep for the eyes of men; but it is another way of impressing upon men a thought which deserves a moment's attention. If no man could be found that was able to nurse and care for this child in his lustings, and fits of temper, then it is plain that God did so; and that the cries forced from the heart and lips of Moses are in some sense or other the articulate utterances of the Holy Spirit, as if almost overpowered by the ingratitude, the ignorance, and wilfulness of this child of the Desert. Groanings unutterable is the thought of the Apostle Paul as he thinks upon this subject, combined with intercession for those so infirm and debased by sin that they are unable to help themselves. It is this child that is studied by the thoughtful student; he tries to place himself in a position to read distinctly what the story means; this is the position of Moses; and there is no one to stand by him, to converse with him about what is so perplexing; it is only when he enters the Tabernacle and talks with God, as face to face, and friend with friend, that the true science of the movement dawns upon his soul. In the order of the thoughts of science the man here is analysing his own soul; but it is by the roundabout way of studying the thoughts, lustings, and actions, good and bad, of other men, that he finds himself to be the epitome of the masses of men. Moses reasoned empirically and spiritually upon these problems rising from the intellectual to the moral; the people were psychic; they had not developed so far as to become intellectual and moral students; and it was in this sense that they were two generations of God behind Moses, the servant of God.

This is the standpoint of study, of trying to realise what these things mean? It is out of place to think of the children of Israel in the Desert as like, or to be compared with, theologians and Christians of this age; they are literal children in spiritual matters, and it is as such that they should be studied and judged. The lines of thought must run upon the lines of the development of life; this child of the Desert, no matter how childish his cries for bread and water, his lustings for flesh, impatience, inconsistency and folly; the child is sinful, pettish, erring, wilful, rebellious; but, somehow, the patient gracious Spirit cared for this child. How? Even as a loving tender mother in the same



devoted, unwearied spirit cares for her little one when sick and ailing, fretful and peevish, wilful and rebellious. A mother may forget, be wearied out, and even feel the deep heart-pangs of Moses and express them; but the Lord, the gracious Spirit, is perfect patience and love; and this is the heavenly vision not attainable by man. If, therefore, the five books of Moses are studied, with these thoughts at the heart of them, it is possible that a truer conception of what they mean may be ultimately reached. The intellectual reasoning is somewhat complex, because the thoughts have to be studied with the light of the Beatitudes, creation and the generations in their series, cast upon them. With the Book of Exodus the special living forms, after the Beatitudes, is creation, the generations of heaven and earth and the generations of Adam; and the order of the development of life must be followed, remembering that it is physical forms in which the thoughts are cast, and yet they must be so ordered as to become spiritually living and organic. Thus, for example: the creation; chaos, darkness, Spirit movement, light, light and dark, day and night; the waters and firmament, heaven; the water, earth and seed bearing seed; the sun, moon, and stars; fowls in the air and fish in the sea; beasts of the field and man in the likeness of God. In Egypt it is the chaos and dark state of Israel in its bondage; the separation and Moses; the Spirit moving for redemption by Moses, Aaron, and among the people; the light that shone forth in the burning bush in Midian; the darkness and light in the contest betwixt Moses and Pharaoh; the night of darkness also the day of redemption. If the generations of Heaven and Earth are brought in, then the forms are Man made from the dust of the earth in-breathed by God and becoming a living soul; the garden; the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil; the helpmeet; the serpent; sin by disobedience; judgment and the promised seed and outside the garden. As analogous thoughts in Exodus extending beyond the birth from Egypt there follows in due order: the man-child earthly, beginning to live and to become a living soul; the invisible garden in the desert not seen by eyes of flesh, and the water and bread of life; the wise counsel of Jethro the priest of Midian and the fruit from that seed; the helpmeet for men in the ten words; the worship of the golden calf; judgment and rejection of Israel; and, as outside the garden, there is added as special development pointing to the future the sacerdotal system

of worship ; the Tabernacle, the glory over it, the Man within, Moses shut out, and the Pillar of Cloud by day and of Fire by night.

It will be observed that the Book of Exodus in this way catches up, as by reflection, the revelation of creation, and the generations of Heaven and Earth ; and the consummation of these is the Tabernacle, Christ, and His glory as Guide, Protector, and Light for Israel. If the Book of Leviticus is compared with the generations of Noah, and of the sons of Noah, as psychic revelations the thoughts run thus : 1, the world in its sinful wicked state ; 2, the Ark, Noah, his sons, and their wives ; 3, those in the Ark saved, those outside lost ; 4, yet the Ark contains clean and unclean ; 5, the long year in the Ark ; 6, the earth possessed by Noah ; the sacredness of life ; 7, the Covenant with all flesh as seen in the bow on the Cloud. As compared with these and analogous in thought the divisions in Leviticus run thus : 1, sin and sin offerings ; 2, Aaron and his sons as priests ; 3, Nadab and Abihu, false and true worship, judgment ; 4, the clean and unclean in Mosaism ; 5, the great day of Atonement ; 6, blood as sign for life, the lawful and unlawful ; 7, the consecration of Aaron and sons to the priesthood ; 8, the feasts as signs ; 9, the lamps, oil, and shewbread, and the blasphemy of the Name ; 10, the year of Jubilee ; 11, blessing and cursing ; 12, vows and tithe. It will be observed that in the Noah series, from Noah to Isaac the consummation is the new earth in Noah and the land possessed by Isaac ; but in Leviticus there is quite a new development of thought in Aaron, the priesthood, feasts, the Tabernacle, the Name, the year of Jubilee, blessing and cursing, vows and tithes. The fitness of this extension in psychic thought in Mosaism can be seen at a glance ; and they are foreshadowed in the generations of Shem, Terah, Ishmael, and Isaac.

If the attention is turned to the book of Numbers, it will follow, as suggested, that the generations which are pre-figured in this book will be found in the generations of Shem, Terah, Ishmael, Esau and Jacob. The thoughts and actions are so complex in this book that it is very difficult to fix the shadows or figures, and to apprehend in what way they are to be applied. In the order of development from Egypt this is the third, but it is the third of the fifth ; in other words of that of intellectual inquiry by man. The third is always a revelation of the Spirit ; and in the figure of the third day of creation it is the separation of sea

and earth and the making manifest of seed bearing seed. This is a revelation of the work of the Spirit within this child from Egypt, or upon the children of Israel, from Sinai through the forty years wandering until they are almost ready to pass over Jordan into the promised land. Perhaps the truer way to think of this book is that it is pre-figured in the generations in Genesis from Shem onward ; and, Numbers is the fore-shadowing of the far greater movement in Israel and mankind throughout the ages. If this conception is correct then men by the careful study of this book may be led to understand more clearly the work of the patient gracious Spirit in the intellectual and moral spheres of history among Jews and Christians. 1. It can easily be seen that the numbering of the people at Sinai falls in with the Spirit's work ; and it will be remembered that the generations of Shem in Genesis are summed up in the numeration of a few names ; but as behind the few names in the generations of Shem there lies families, tribes and nations, so in the numbering at Sinai the people of God, by their families, and as a nation, are all numbered before God. This may not seem to be important at the first glance, but on reflection it swells out into a truth inconceivably great, it is that marvellous conception that, to every child of God, the Spirit gives a name and place ; and Christ seems to emphasise this thought in the words, " Even the hairs of your head are all numbered." 2. As in the generations of Terah there is separation from Chaldea and Haran, and also as in the third day of creation, so in Numbers the conception of separating clean and unclean, the trial of jealousy, the law of the Nazarite and the blessing of God resting on the people are worthy of notice. The Aaronic form of blessing rested upon Abraham (1) the Lord blessed him ; (2) kept him ; (3) spake to him face to face ; (4) filled his soul with grace ; (5) gave him Divine light ; (6) endowed him with peace ; (7) placed His name upon Abram's name ; (8) and made him a means of blessing. 3. Is it conceivable that the offerings by the princes at the dedication of the Tabernacle reflects in some sense the name and glory of Ishmael ? It is rather remarkable that this portion closes with Moses entering the Tabernacle ; God hears his voice ; He speaks to Moses ; and, in these very concepts the name behind them is Ishmael. The influence voice and work of the Spirit are well illustrated in the gifts so freely given by the princes of Israel, and that mystic communion with God granted to Moses. 4. In creation series

the concept is light by sun, moon and stars ; in the generations of Isaac inward grace, the intellectual and moral light of truth and righteousness ; and, in Numbers, the lighting of the seven lamps, the consecration of the Levites for service in the place of the first-born in every family and the limitation of their period of service. 5. This paragraph throws the thoughts back upon the past in creation to fowl and fish in air and water ; to Esau and the separation in the family of Isaac ; to the Passover feast and its institution. But what if death defilement, travelling in a foreign land make men unclean, what are they to do ? How are they to keep the Passover ? If a stranger from a strange land visits the people of God at such a season, then what will his relations be to the Passover feast, and to the redeemed people of God ? In this matter there is not any distinction as to persons, classes, or nations ; this ordinance is for all men, and all are to be made welcome. This door of grace must not be shut in the face of any man ; there is blessing in the Passover ; and it is for every soul that will partake of the feast. But, most solemn warning, if any man thinks that he is clean, and neglects wilfully to bring his offering and keep the feast ; then that man is as a dead man, the load of sin rests upon him, and he shall bear it. Surely this is reflected back from Christ upon Israel ; here is the universality of the truth that Christ, our Passover, is the Passover for all men and nations. Glory be given to His Name for this most wonderful revelation of His mercy to mankind through all the ages. This is a precious message of mercy to Esau, Edom, Adam, and mankind ; and let no man attempt to limit this magnificent embrace of the everlasting arms around these poor sinful children in the Desert of this world. Can the story of the Tabernacle and its movements be applied in the same way ? Even so ; every child who has watched for pillar of cloud by day and fire by night ; for the movements of Divine Providence—the Spirit of God—they have not done so in vain ; surely there is a deeper truth here that passes the comprehension of men ; it is because the Passover is for, and embraces all, that the pillar of cloud and fire is for all in the journey of life. Thus to wait upon God is true wisdom ; but to move without guidance is to depart into the darkness of night and desert ; it is to wander lost in the wilderness, and to have no guide to the home of the soul and to the land of promise. 6. The concept in creation is the beasts and man in

the likeness of God ; in the generations of Shem series, Jacob and his sons ; in Numbers it is the use of the trumpets for marching, the call to war and defence ; and their uses in days of gladness, feasts, new moons and sacrifices. The child is now conceived to have developed into a man ; and the duties of a man are required of him in the order of march through the great Desert. But not without a guide, and this is the meaning of the request to Hobab—the beloved—to become the guide in all journeyings. It is true he seems to refuse, and for reasons known this well may be the answer given ; but there is hope in the pleading of Moses, and the silence of the Guide, where no answer is given, it may be assumed that the invisible Guide left them not in their journeyings through the great Desert ; but at the prayer of Moses rose up when they moved, and returned to rest with Israel.

Here it would seem as if the germ thoughts in Genesis ended ; the light for the moment fails ; it is darkness in the camp, and men are left to themselves that they may think upon all that they have heard, and profit from their past experiences. Is this strange ? Is it unexpected ? What is the meaning of this change, when, as it were, the visible guide is gone, and the Invisible cannot be seen by men ? This is not the first time in history that such a story is recorded ; it is that of Eve in Eden ; and it is that of Noah and the wine. Is the innocent child a man true and righteous, being untried ; or is it only when the trial is met and overcome that man reaches manhood ? This is the deep problem of Taberah ; the fierce lusting, the fire, the weeping and crying for flesh ; the remembrance of the good things in Egypt, and the despising of the bread from heaven. Poor child, Ishmael ; this is a very serious matter ; so long as the guide held the hand it was well, and all went well ; but, with the departure of the guide, chaos and darkness, lusting and complaining break out ; the soul is in fire ; and this is as the mouth of hell in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. What can man do when hell is thus let loose ? What is heavenly bread to a man when his hunger is for flesh, fish, onions, and garlic ? Will he put the rein of reason and the curb of morality on the beast ? It is vain, this sort of disease of the soul laughs at reason and defies ethics ; it is unreasonable, immoral, and irreligious, and the devil within knows this fact. But can men be so foolish, so lost to self-restraint and knowledge of right and wrong as to act in this outrageous manner ? Let history provide the answer ; it is not

necessary to descend to the masses to find such men ; they are to be found everywhere, from emperors and popes down to the basest classes. It is not the foul disease of psychic corruption that men require to study ; it is to find and receive the remedy that God alone can supply, when men cry to Him in their agony and despair, and even wish themselves dead so that the miseries and the wickednesses of men may not be permitted to go on forever. What is God's reply to such cries ? Even the gift of his Holy Spirit, so that men may be strengthened inwardly and spiritually, and thus be sustained in that fierce fight against carnality. Lust is a fierce cruel form of sin, but it is not the only one ; men know something of envy, hatred, and of back-biting in families ; even One more meek than Moses was envied, hated, and evil things said about Him ; this is as a leprosy of the soul, and it is to be condemned in brother or sister, priest or woman. What is the root of all sin ; the sin that prevents all good ; the sin that makes men cowards, fools, renegades, wilful, disobedient, and renders them unfit for the service of God ? It is unbelief, want of faith, the limiting of the Holy One, the turning of the back against the promises and the inheritance of God ; the desire for the world, its pleasures and glory, and the rejection of what is heavenly and Divine. This is the story of the spies and their evil report ; even as they prophesied so it came to pass ; they said they were not able to fight the Canaanites and they failed ; they died in the Desert ; but with Joshua and Caleb it was otherwise ; they were true and faithful, and the promises and the inheritance became theirs by faith in God. These are graphic pictures which illustrate what is meant by sin. When men see such things done all around them, and declare, with the authority of prophets, that there is no such thing as sin ; and that men have no free will, but that they are only evolved animals ; then it would seem as if they were intentionally, willingly, and wilfully seeking to make themselves believe lies ; they are not merely unfaithful ; they wish to destroy themselves and others ; and it is possible, in some way or other, God knows how, man cannot know, that they will reach this dreadful end. The remedy follows the revelation of the disease ; it is to turn from such evil thoughts and ways ; by faith to grasp the promises and enter the inheritance ; and offer with the whole heart, even the heart itself, a freewill offering to God. There is forgiveness with God, so that men may fear and obey him ; but a curse and woe rests

upon the presumptuous sinner, no matter who he may be, Jew, Christian, or heathen. This is the day of God's mercy ; His Sabbath of rest and of love, and to reject these, and defy the laws of God is utter madness ; the end of that way is death. The sweet reasonableness of giving the heart to God in love and service cannot be denied ; the risk of forgetting is great ; thus the Spirit suggests that even a little piece of blue ribbon attached to a garment, as a visible sign, will tend to steady the heart in its affection, to remember the great redemption from the world, and evil, by the Lord, the Saviour. It is because men forget, do not wish to remember, omit the use of what is sign, that they go astray, despise truth, reject law and order, and thus become rebellious in heart and action. This is the meaning of the story of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and of the princes, men of renown in the nation of Israel. They did not remember God ; they forgot that Moses and Aaron were servants of God ; they cherished the thought that they had grievances ; that the rulers took too much upon themselves ; and that they were all equally good, so that it was presumption in Moses and Aaron to lift themselves up above their brethren in Israel. This story cuts very deep into history, secular and sacred ; there is not a word here that condemns the sacred right of men to rebel against tyrants and ambitious rulers who would tread men under their feet ; it is the condemnation of ambitious men who would do the very things which they ascribe to Moses and Aaron ; it is the rise of chaos and darkness against order, law, and righteousness. What has the result been, as a rule, of all similar events among men ? The earth has opened her mouth and swallowed them up, they were not fit to live in society, or in a nation, where truth, law, and righteousness reign. The voice of this mob is, we are as good, or better, than those who rule ; it is our turn to take the reins and drive ; there is no God to whom men, or parties are accountable ; therefore, even though the result be the destruction of the state, we mean to assert our rights, put down those who are up and command, and raise up those who are down, that they may reign, even though they have not learned that first lesson in society, obedience to righteous laws. This ambitious spirit to rule and reign is a veritable plague ; masses of men have died through its fierce virulence ; and, what is worse, it seems that the plague cannot be stayed unless the Mediator comes betwixt the rebels and God. Is this story of the Desert true spiritually

and of world-wide truth and application ? It would appear to be so, and, it may be, that in a far-reaching sense the story of the rods can now be applied. Men are at this stage of history familiar with all systems of truth, forms of Government, and kinds of religion, let these rods be all brought before the Lord of the whole earth ; let them be placed in His presence ; and let the test be the living rod with buds, blossoms, and fruit. Is not Christ this Rod of God ? Is not His Word the living symbol ? Is it not to be conceived that the "method of Christ" will prove that His right is to rule, and that all who reject Him, or disobey His commandments are rebels in heart, will, and action ? This portion of the Book of Numbers seems to transcend the generations in Genesis ; it might be tested in various ways by the method of Christ, but it may be sufficient to do so by the usual questions. Whence this spirit that lived at Taberah ? From the source of evil ; from the lustings of flesh and spirit ; from the chaos, darkness, and corruption in a human soul. When have the sins of Aaron and Miriam been made manifest ? Through all time in the history of fallen man ; Moses is the living sign set up before men by the Spirit, and Christ is the Reality. Why this failure to go in and possess the land promised ? The reply of the Spirit is because of unbelief ; the Egyptian Ishmaelites were unfit to enter in. What did men require to prepare them for this fulfilment of the purpose of God ? Faith in God ; renewed hearts ; changed wills and devoted lives ; in fact that they should be so changed as to become man morally in God's likeness. How could this end be attained ? By imitating Moses, and by repudiating the foolish, futile, wicked rebellion of Korah and his company. Who is the Rod that possesses Life in Himself ? The reply is Christ.

The first section of this book is an objective study of the ways of God with men in the great desert of life, as they may be studied in the light of the method of Christ, and in the generations in Genesis. The second section is a more subjective study ; it is into the human heart and its lusts ; into families and their feuds ; into nations and their conflicts and revolts, and the end is the supremacy of Christ, the Mediator, whose right it is to reign, because He has Life in Himself, and in His Word, by that order of life which men can see and understand. The next section, it may be assumed, is the revelation as to the method of the great change required, of a spiritual kind in man ; the Spirit is within and



around the spirit of man pointing the finger to spiritual truths of the greatest importance. The previous section proves fully that in the family of Aaron, those nearest to God, in His service, there is no priest to be found in the Aaronic order fit to serve God in His sanctuary ; had Aaron been dealt with according to his deserts, his place would have been with Miriam outside the camp as a branded leper. It is the same with Levites and princes, they have no conception of the gravity of their sin in pride, self-assertion, and rebellion against God, law and order ; they are unfit to live upon God's earth, and the earth, as if it were a living creature, as in a sense it is, being God's creature, it opens its mouth and they are swallowed up. From these facts there arises the supremacy of Christ as High Priest and Ruler in Israel ; the shadow of a high priest may remain but the Reality is Christ. It is with these thoughts clear in view that this section begins ; and it is for men to study carefully all that is revealed as to priests bearing the iniquity of the sanctuary and of the priesthood. The words are very different, but the thought implied is this ; that as priests they are in fact rejected ; found to be utterly incompetent for this work ; and that what they have to do is to try and bear the priesthood, so that they may find out the truth of their own unfitness and incompetency ; and thus be led to Him, Who alone is High Priest and Ruler in Israel. The Lord seems to say, "Take up this yoke ; try to bear honestly and truly the weight of iniquity that rests upon Israel, and, if you do so, you will find it so unutterably heavy, so dreadful to bear, that it will crush you down to the earth." Alas ! for any so-called priesthood among men ; what silly caricatures of grace, mercy, and truth, have they proved themselves to be ; how utterly ignorant of their true position ; and how completely unable to bear the iniquity of the sanctuary. They cover themselves with vain dresses ; they shroud themselves over with divine authority ; they are the elect and select servants of God, ruling in His Name ; and all the time they are spiritually rejected ; they are like children put to learn true lessons, and being so full of conceit and self-righteousness, covered with these, as with a coat of mail, the arrows of God's truth cannot penetrate into their souls. The Rod of God, the Priesthood, and the Ordinance of the Red Heifer, are awful facts ; what can these priests do to bear the iniquity of men ? Absolutely nothing ; the voice of the Spirit runs thus : "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer, without spot, wherein there is no

blemish, and upon which never came yoke. And he shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his face." Is it necessary to add a word of explanation to this graphic picture, and the means of purification from uncleanness in priest and people? There is only one spotless soul without blemish among men. He is of the people, and from the people; they brought Him to the priests. He was brought forth without the city; He was slain before their faces; and they were utterly unconscious that He was bearing the burden of their iniquity, and that of the people which they were commissioned to bear. This strange symbolism of the Red Heifer as a "perpetual statute" in Israel requires careful study; not by any earthly priesthood is spiritual cleansing possible; it is by the sprinkled blood that there is peace; but through contact with this death, the priest and the clean person gathering the ashes become unclean; and there is no cleansing from the taint of sin and death, except through the ministrations of one who is clean; not by a symbolic priest, by the sacred ashes and running water, but by Christ and His Holy Name. The word of the Spirit here is surely applicable to Christ alone, and to the Work of the Holy Spirit for the purifying of the soul; there is symbol and shadow in the Desert story, but the Reality is Christ in the Gospels, and the Holy Spirit in the Acts.

When the shadow of history falls in this strange way upon the Desert story it is necessary to pause and consider what this may mean in the development of the kingdom of Grace. Somehow the shadow is reflecting back light upon the substance; and substance and shadow are in correspondence. It is a new period; there is a new movement, and Israel finds rest for a time in Kadesh. Here Miriam the sister of Moses died and was buried; and here the people were awakened to an awful want, there was no water, and men cannot live without water. The stupidity of mankind is incomprehensible; God gives to men powers, desires, aspirations, longings; and immediately they feel their wants, then the spirit of complaining breaks out thus; would God we were dead, or in Egypt, or anywhere except where we are, so that we might get rid of this craving for something which we cannot at once find and appropriate. Water is the symbol; the Holy Spirit is the fact; and where can sensuous, sacerdotal, earthly minded men, find the Holy Spirit, when they have not been awakened to the fact that it is the Spirit in them,

that is moving them toward this discontent so that they may become conscious of spiritual truth. Let men think upon the beautiful symbolism, and allegorical teaching in this story ; the people had Moses and Aaron, Mosaism in all its fulness, and these could not supply their wants. What will ? Look upon that Rock, Christ, let Moses speak to it, and out of that Rock there will flow rivers of living water. Here Moses fails ; and Mosaism is found to be useless for salvation. It has been a means of grace to men for instruction in truth and righteousness ; but at this juncture it becomes human and utters the foolish words, " Hear now ye rebels ; must we fetch you water out of this Rock ? " What can Mosaism know of the deep things of Christ and of His Spirit ? Mosaism does not know even this much, that the servants of God are permitted to disobey God and to strike the Rock, so that the Water of Life may flow out among men. Strange coincidences these ; the thirst of humanity for the living ; Mosaism with its forms ; Christ and the Spirit ; Mosaism in its momentary passion committing an act so reprehensible ; and God overruling all these for the supplying of the aspirations and desires of men, so that what the Spirit is working in them shall find its solution and satisfaction in what He is doing for them. Here is written the doom upon Mosaism ; it failed to believe, to receive, and to be sanctified by the Spirit. To Israel this is Meribah : the place of strife and division ; " Israel strove with the Lord, and He was sanctified in them."

This is the parting of the ways ; the great watershed of the Desert story ; behind lies Mosaism and before there lies the land of Edom ; the weary journey ; and the death of Aaron with all that this signifies to Judah and Jerusalem. There is a vision of the shadow of the future in varied forms ; the Canaanite possessor begins to fear that his inheritance so long possessed may be taken from him. Israel begins to realise the fact that the future has to be faced bravely, and that by the Divine aid the land has to be fought for, conquered, and possessed. A foretaste of this conflict is begun and the issue will be even to Hormah—to the utter destruction of the enemies of God. But the vision of the Way is very long, very trying and very discouraging ; it is from Hor by the Red Sea encompassing the land of Edom, and in symbol this is a very long journey in that great desert. In this Desert wandering falls in the story of the weariness of the wanderers, their longing for rest, the thought

of Egypt, the death in the desert, and the despising of the Word of God ; they loathed the angels' food, the Bread from heaven ; they became serpent-like in their thoughts and ways ; and the serpents of fire, the subtle fiery thoughts of earthly cunning came amongst them for their destruction. The remedy in the Desert was the brazen serpent, raised up in the camp and seen by the eye of faith ; the true remedy in all ages is Divine Wisdom in Christ the Crucified upon the Cross ; it is unbelief that breeds the serpent brood, and it is faith that destroys the poison of sin. Now this region of the Desert is well known ; it is not on the borders of Egypt, or near to Horeb ; but close by the land of Moab, where the incestuous family of Lot and his daughters dwell ; in other words, this is on the border of what is rising above mere experience ; where the fervid imagination is set free ; poetry and song bursts out from deep wells, and the prophetic Voice is heard uttering words of woe upon Moab, the degraded people who serve cruel Chemosh. The contest with Og king of Bashan was of short duration ; with this conflict the enemies of Israel were destroyed, and they encamped in the plains of Moab opposite the city of Jericho. The story of Balak the king of Moab and of Baalam of Pethor and their strange method of seeking to destroy Israel by cursing the people will repay careful study. The episode occupies nearly three chapters, and divination, sacrifice, and other means are used to get God to curse Israel. The covetous prophet would fain, for the rewards promised, have brought the curse of God upon Israel ; but it was all in vain ; the star of Jacob was in the ascendant ; the sceptre of Israel would smite Moab ; out of Jacob would come the King whose right it is to reign ; and all His enemies shall be subdued and become His subjects. The intellectual vision passes away ; and Balaam returns to his own place and end. Balak plotted in what way he might be able to circumvent and destroy Israel. The fruit of that plot is found in the idolatries and immoralities of Baal-peor ; and it is the action of Phinehas that brings about health and peace for Israel. That this event is of great importance may be seen by the covenant of peace given to Phinehas with the promise of the everlasting priesthood.

This section, it may be conceived, closes at this stage, and now it may be asked, What do these things mean ? Are they only stories of the Desert life, or are they also prophetic fore-shadowings of the Christian dispensation in some form or another, meant

to be understood when these things have had their fulfilment in history ? It may be too soon to ask such questions, or even to try to form a definite opinion upon the thoughts suggested. This, however, ought to be kept in view, the subject matter is of great importance ; the field of thought is that of the intellect, of Ishmael ; and it is the third portion of the third book, thus as it were a special revelation by the Holy Spirit of matters of great importance. If the questions in the order of development are asked, they may suggest thoughts bearing upon the interpretation. Whence this Priest over the House of God, who is really a Priest, able to assist priests and common people, so that they may be saved ? Whence that symbolic red heifer, spotless and without any spiritual blemish able to cleanse and purify the souls of men ? He is not a priest after the order of Aaron, but after the order of eternal truth and righteousness, thus He must be the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. When was He thus made manifest to save, bless, cleanse and purify mankind ? It was during time, not in Judea only : He is the Rock of Salvation in all ages : and it has been by Him in all dispensations of grace, that the Holy Spirit as a river of Life has accompanied mankind in their wanderings. True, in the order of development, there comes a time when the Rock is smitten even to death by men ; but this is when they are beginning to see and understand what things mean ; yet also before they are so spiritually developed as to comprehend the tremendous consequences of such a sin, because if they had not acted in ignorance, passion and prejudice, how could any way of repentance and pardon be found ? Why this story of the Desert, the priests, Miriam's death, the Rock, the water, the weary journey compassing Edom, the death of Aaron, the wicked Canaanite, the fiery serpents, Balaam and Baal-peor ? They all speak of history and its great events ; and truly if there had not been, to begin with, the eternal High Priest in the heavens, there would not have been any purpose of salvation ; no long desert journey for mankind ; no symbolic priests to teach men by their words and raiment, by their symbolic acts, and by those actions which for ever condemn them because of their unlikeness and their unfitness to represent, the One High Priest of mankind. What has His mission been to this Desert life of mankind ? Even to overthrow the usurping Canaanite brood of evil to destruction, and to crush that vile fiery spirit of unbelief by a wisdom that is Divine. How will He be

able to do all this ? Is not this the meaning of the story of Balaam ? What can diviners, soothsayers, or magicians do against the Divine Wisdom and Power ? Absolutely nothing ; all such men are poor ignorant, superstitious mortals ; they do not understand their own false devices ; how much less are they able to comprehend the Divine Wisdom that overrules all their foolish designs and brings them to nought. Who is this spiritual Phinehas by whom a covenant of peace is brought to mankind ? He is the Christ, the Son of God, the Destroyer of evil ; and it is by Him that idolatry and immorality will be utterly destroyed. Let men beware, Moab and Midian are not dead ; these powers change their names, but their natures remain the same through all generations. The serpent still beguiles men ; and if they fall under the subtle influence of this power, the end may be Baal-peor, even the tearing asunder of the soul from God, and the end death.

The third section of the Book of Numbers is the story of the Desert, and the wanderings ; the fourth section seems to be a preparation for that great event, which is the object of faith, the subject of hope, and the fruition of patience ; the bud, the blossom, and the fruit are there ; the Rod of God lives, the inheritance will be inherited, and the promises of God will be fulfilled. Let the people of God be numbered ere they cross the river Jordan ; see how they have fared in the long journey ; and find out how many are left of that manhood that left Egypt, and would not enter into the land of promise, because of unbelief, to inherit the promises of God ? Moses still survives, but he cannot pass over to inherit the goodly land, as the leader of Israel ; beside him there remains only Joshua and Caleb, faith and truth ; the True and Faithful One, and it is by Him that the new movement must be led, only His Name is now Joshua—Jesus—Saviour. The Protector of the broken-hearted, the Helper of the weak, the Counsellor of all who need counsel, and the Rest and Peace of all who follow Him. This new era is for the true-hearted children of God ; it is for a nation of priests, for the children of Israel who possess the promises, because what is very remarkable in this contemplation of the future and of the land there is not the shadow of an official priest or Levite ; they are ignored as if they had no existence ; it is the people that have been developed ; they are all the children of God, by faith in Christ ; the past is buried in the desert, Israel is God's son, and all are conceived to be con-

secrated priests to God in the year and era that is dawning. Further, this movement means not only enfranchisement, liberty; the individuals are free, and within natural limitations they are permitted to make vows and keep them, as they personally consider they have a right to do in the presence of the Lord. The sacredness of truth, and the pledged vow or promise, as most sacred, is worthy of consideration; this means manhood, duty, responsibility in the sight of God, and truly this is a stage of development much required among men. It is this accursed vacillation, uncertainty, duplicity, false reasoning for selfish ends, that is the abomination of Midian and Moab, of the heart and the reason; selfishness is at the root of it all, and these must be cast down, and cast out, before the promises can be possessed. The curse of God rests upon Balaam and all his followers; the struggle here goes to the root of matters; it appears, in the shadow, as stern, cruel, something to be deprecated; but what it really means is that men are to have no pity on themselves, or others, if they are found to be in spirit like Balaam and his friends. This is an ugly picture for children to study; they cannot understand it, because it is so unlike the New Testament revelation; but men who know what these things mean will have no difficulty in seeing that this is a question of life and death; for if Moab and Midian clutch the throat, and poison the atmosphere, it is surely true that those who are subject to those powers will die. Men may be fastidious, shrug their shoulders, and turn away from the picture presented to their view in Numbers; it is impossible to say it is a desirable one; if they are Moabites and Midianites they will say it is outrageous; but the issue cannot be questioned; on the one side is God, Christ, manhood, the welfare of mankind, and on the other, selfishness and self-conceit, the powers that fight against truth and righteousness. These are downright enemies; and they are not to be favourably considered for a moment. What is to be said about those who linger behind; who love the land they now inhabit; who are very wealthy; and find the means of increased wealth around them? Let them not be judged too severely; all men are not patriots, or fully consecrated to the service of God; if they are true, loyal, obedient, helpful, it is well; the world is large, and men are free; there is blessing in the past, as well as in the future; the important matter is faithfulness in spirit to the Lord of the promises, and of the promised Land; it is by faith that the promises are inherited; and faith can change

Midian into a consecrated land, and Moab into obedience and faithful service. The past, and the journeyings of the people of God, from Rameses to Moab opposite Jericho, is the vision of the Spirit; and of that Desert life in which mankind has been involved because of sin and unbelief. How varied the scenes, how mighty the powers of evil, how terrible the risk for mankind, how patient the Spirit, how gracious the Guide and Leader, and how merciful the living God. In the fierce struggle of the battle there is no time, or opportunity, or power to study the progress of the conflict, or to reflect upon the unseen General who is conducting the operations. In the midst of the storm the sailor cannot see beyond the clouds and the waves, and understand in what way there can be One who controls all events, and is able to overrule all things, so that the end shall be for good and for blessing to men. The child, the youth, the inexperienced man, cannot grasp the purposes of God, past, present, and future; but there comes a time when God says to men in some form of words, or signs, that can be understood, that they ought not to be children any longer. The promises are theirs, for they are the children of the promises of God; the inheritance of manhood lies before them, and it becomes necessary to decide to what use that inheritance is to be put in the future. Under the form of history, or allegory, men are compelled to face their destiny, and make their choice. It is absurd to suppose that men must continue to live among changing shadows, imperfect conceptions, and foolish rational ideas, that do not fit into nature, man, or the Word of God. The inheritance lies there straight ahead; it is to be possessed; it will be divided into lots; but, ominous but, are the men of this generation prepared for the great reality? or are they children still, and are they unable to comprehend all that the journeyings mean, and where they stand in the marvellous providence of God at the end of this dispensation of grace? "Ye shall divide the land by lots;" "But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants," then there must follow pricks in the eyes, thorns in the sides, and vexation in the land; the end will be not peace and prosperity; but, as God has done to the faithless in the past, so it will be in the future upon those who will not be aroused to the claims of manhood and mankind. This is the vision of Numbers; and yonder lies the land of promise; this book was written more than 3,000 years ago; in spirit it is as true, comprehensive, and stern in its message to men now as when written by the hand of Moses in the land of Moab.



The Book of Exodus tells men from whence Israel came ; when the Redeemer came to the redeemed ; why the redemption was accomplished ; what that redemption meant to Israel ; how it was accomplished ; who the Deliverer was, and for whom He undertook this work. Whither they were going they knew, it was to the land promised to their fathers ; and the education they received was the training necessary to fit them for the inheritance, which was their portion from God. Leviticus as a book for further advanced students speaks of sin, from whence deliverance is required ; the necessity of a Priest during time ; why the strange fire of unhallowed worship is worthy of death ; what man's condition is as unclean and morally leprous ; how in the great day of atonement, the atonement for sin and reconciliation with God is provided for ; who provides this salvation, even to moral regeneration in a new life ; and whither all this leads is shown by consecration and sanctification, by a new life with its glad feasts, a life in which there is light, joy, obedience and freedom. The Book of Numbers repeats in varied ways similar conceptions of truth, but it is conveyed under the form of a history in the Desert, in concepts worthy of careful study ; but specially it seems to sum up the past ; portray the present ; points to the new age in the future ; and indicates in what way the people of God will be prepared for the true inheritance and the fulfilment of God's promises. In the Book of Deuteronomy, the training of the children of Israel is carried forward another stage ; manhood has been attained with its responsibilities of choice and of duty, and thus the student stands by the side of Moses, and listens to the great master in training, as he thinks upon the past with all its experiences ; the present with its duties ; and the future with all it contains of possible blessing and cursing. With Exodus faith has been revived in Israel ; with Leviticus there is the inspiration of hope ; with Numbers painful experiences, manifold blessings, sure guidance, and patience ; and in Deuteronomy the sunset of the life of Moses is aglow with Divine love ; the great lawgiver of Israel has seen the good land of truth, life, and love ; his heart responds to that love ; and it may well be that, with the exception of the writer of the fourth Gospel, few names could be set alongside that of Moses the servant of God.

For the sake of brevity it may be found sufficient at the present time to inquire, by the usual questions, as to the purpose of this Book of Deuteronomy. As the fourth in the series the first ques-

tion is in this form : What is the result of this great work of redemption ? The finger is pointed to Israel as encamped on the plains of Moab, where one of the most remarkable events in history is almost completed ; the infant nation born in Egypt is now a strong nation, and it is ready to enter in and possess the land around which so many promises of God are centred. The purpose of God has not failed ; His Word is true and faithful ; and, in the teeth of every form of opposition, He has redeemed His people. Whence have they come ? From the chaos of Egypt and its bondage ; from Sinai and its experiences ; from the land visited and lost because of unbelief ; from the weary journeying around Edom, and from the wiles and deadly schemings of Moab and Midian. When did Israel discover their true Guide and Lawgiver ? At Horeb, for it was there that the Covenant of life and obedience to God was made known ; there they were told that their obligations rested not upon law, in a legal form, but upon responsive affection, love. They were to obey not because of law, but because they had been redeemed from bondage in Egypt and made the freeborn sons of God. To undeveloped children this lesson is difficult to learn ; it is not a problem of theology ; it is one of gratitude, thankfulness, and of constant remembrance. Because He so loved and redeemed in the past ; the duty, the pleasant obligation must ever remain to love and obey the Redeemer. Why was all this done for Egyptian slaves ? Not for any goodness in them ; not for any love of truth or righteousness of which they could boast ; but simply because God is gracious and merciful ; because He was pleased to reveal this purpose to men in His Own way and time ; because He had given promises to Abraham ; and, being True and Faithful, the work of redemption was, in due time, carried out for Israel. The Desert, with all its lessons, was past ; and Israel was about to pass over Jordan to possess the land promised to their fathers. But, let men remember and tremble, for although the Lord rides in His Chariot of Grace, supported by mercy and truth, the clouds also are His pathway ; the thunder, lightning, and the storm of justice and judgment go before Him, and thus woe and cursing upon Canaan, whilst hope and blessing is the portion of Israel. Why the curse upon Canaan and the blessing upon Israel ? Was Israel so very much superior to Canaan morally and spiritually ? Not so, God's mercy is to all men ; He gives that men may use and respond to His gifts ; the Canaanites had their opportunity

and they misused their privileges. The cup of their iniquities was full to the brim, and the day of visitation, justice, and judgment had come. Israel saw these things ; a new day of privilege had come to Israel, therefore their responsibilities were increased, and thus it ought to have been easier for them to love and obey the Lord their Redeemer. What form practically should these gracious obligations have taken in response to the grace, mercy, and love of God ? In obedience to law ; pure spiritual worship ; the sacredness of life ; love of truth, purity of heart, gratitude and thankfulness ; and helpfulness in mercy, compassion, and pity for the sinful, sorrowful, and suffering. Since God had been so kind and merciful to them, was it not their privilege to walk in His footsteps ? How is this end to be attained ? In other words, how is man going to be able to keep these thoughts in remembrance ? The method suggested is practical ; it is to obey in the spirit of love, and not to disobey through ignorance, carelessness, or wilfulness. On this hand, let men read the blessings ; on that, read the cursings ; there is nothing in practical religion mysterious or incomprehensible ; it is believe and live, obey and live ; or cast away faith, cherish the spirit of unbelief, omit to obey and the end will be death. Who has revealed all these things to men ; and to whom has such a revelation of grace and mercy come ? To Israel in Egypt, in the Desert, and by many wonderful signs ; the Covenant in Horeb and Moab was with Israel ; but these covenants were not for Israel only ; they were for strangers then present with Israel ; and they were for all absent from that great meeting, even for mankind in every nation, for the promises to Abraham are not limited, they are for all nations. Israel had been blessed ; Israel was about to receive a cup full of blessing ; but is there not a black cloud on the horizon of this fair and pleasant land ? That cloud speaks of justice and judgment, because of disobedience ; as with Canaan so with Israel ; and men in their astonishment will wonder why God has thus punished His people and brought so many evils upon them ? The reply will not be far to seek, or difficult to find ; the blessing came true and so also did the curse. Israel broke the Covenant ; disobeyed the Law ; went after idols that were not gods even, and thus the fulfilment of the Word of God. Are these not mysterious problems for men to study ? Is it reasonable that they should be so carried forward by a method of development which man does not understand ? Be silent foolish reasoner

and be not so unreasonable ; remember that “ the secret things belong unto the Lord our God ; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.” Why should men complain as if they were hardly dealt with ; and as if they were not to blame ? The Word of God is not hidden so that men cannot find it ; not in heaven that they cannot reach it ; not beyond the sea so that it cannot be brought to them ; it is so near that it is in the hearts and mouths of men ; they know this, for it is their true nature, and their gracious life ; and if they do not obey God it is because they will not do so. Whither does this revelation of grace and mercy in the desert tend ? It points forward to Joshua and the future ; to the song of Moses linked in mysterious correspondence with the song of the Lamb. The vision ends in blessings upon Israel ; in the near future it is the land and the promises fulfilled ; in the far future, the land of truth and righteousness and the fulfilment of all God’s promises to mankind.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MAN, THE LAND, AND THE COMMONWEALTH.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.—“Moses my servant is dead ; now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.” This is the commission given to Joshua, and he is encouraged by God to begin this work with a courageous heart ; not to turn aside to right or left, but to keep the law of God in his heart ; and to meditate upon the Word of God day and night, so that there may be prosperity and success. The conception here is that the generations of Ishmael are now revealed : another cycle of the purpose of grace in Christ has been made manifest ; it is incorporated into the history of mankind ; but men knew not that there lay a meaning of a spiritual kind underneath all these signs in Egypt and in the Desert. It has been suggested that the generations in Ishmael are the fifth in order ; they follow the generations made manifest in Genesis, as summed up in Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, and thus it is a new beginning running through a new cycle, and ending with Joshua the captain of Israel. The faith, hope, patience and love, inwrought into Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph are reproduced in the nation in the Desert : the seed or seeds of grace have developed in a wonderful manner ; and what was in the patriarchs is now manifested in Israel as a nation. The development it will be perceived synchronises with that in the patriarchs ; the forms are different, as might be expected, but the stage of conceptive involution in them is similar to that which takes place by development in Mosaism. In this fifth there is all the fourth—the soul or mind—but the fifth—the intellect—has no lever to rest upon except the past with its treasures of experience, tradition, and revelation ; and it is from these that the intellect must take its thoughts to work up all that is revealed in Mosaism. This as an intricate psychological problem requires to be carefully considered ;

the conception arises that, as yet, the moral nature of man is germinative ; it is as contained in Genesis ; and it has not been developed to an experiential and an empiric system of thought. The intellect, in its operations upon the past, and in the experiences in the Desert, follows after the revelation of God ; and by God's Grace, there is found one man in Israel who, it may be conceived, has in his forty years' experience, as servant and friend of Moses, actually put in order in his own soul, as in a book of law and order, all that Mosaism means as a revelation of gracious law to mankind. The question here is not how much, in what sense, or in what order, Joshua understood Mosaism ; it is how men are now called to look upon this subject in the light of psychology and of the method of Christ, as a record of the order of development in re-creation and in the Kingdom of Grace.

Moses is dead ; this announcement sums up all the past, backward through the Desert to Horeb and Egypt ; to Chaldea, Eden, and to the Breath of God, as Word, forming man in the image of God. Observe and do what is written in the law ; keep it in heart and mind by day and night ; let the law be the word in the mouth ; and then in heart, mind, life, word, the law will be embodied fact ; the very incarnation of law as the Will of God. Here is something new ; a truth so magnificent, divine, far-reaching, that it is hardly possible to grasp and understand all that it means. It is not necessary to study the story, this is for children, to teach them, to give them an ideal, to open their minds to the thoughts of God, to show the invincible power that exists in faith, and what the man so inspired can do by truth, the Word of God. The story fits into the age in which it was written ; it is a graphic picture of the fulfilment of the purpose of God ; but it is a picture for men to study, so that by the study the truth behind, within, and around it, may penetrate the soul, live there, and in due time become transcendent truth, heavenly, divine. The vision is that of the Conquest of Canaan ; the possession of the promised land, and the division of the land among the tribes of Israel. Whence this movement ? It is traceable back through all events, by all causes and effects, to God. When did these events take place ? In time, and men possess the records ; they are as monumental stones taken out of the Jordan and set up that the children may read them, ask their meaning, and never forget, that even as the Lord delivered His people from Egypt and led them in safety through the Red

Sea, so they passed through Jordan at its flood and entered the land of promise. Why did the Lord do all these things for Israel? Had He any plan, purpose, or design, in it all? Truly He had, and He had told men so time after time; He had been faithful to His promises in the past, and Israel might reasonably have expected that this great event would also be fulfilled in due time. The Lord has actually appeared in person with His two-edged sword drawn from its sheath to take the command of the campaign. Joshua is the nominal, not the real, captain of the hosts of Israel. When the Captain reveals Himself then men fall down and worship; the place is holy and the greatest of men will humbly say, "What saith my Lord unto His servant?" He is come for conquest, He is Prince and Captain, in His presence truth is radiant and law triumphant. What is the work to be done? It is to destroy Jericho, conquer Ai, overthrow the five kings, and put down the rulers of Canaan. In other words, to take possession of heart and mind, to overthrow the dominion of the sensuous, and the powers of evil, and by such conquests take away for ever the realm of ignorance, darkness, and death from among men. How is the good land to be possessed? By the tribes of Israel, in their order, according to their families and tribes; to become a nation of men loving truth and doing that which is righteous and lawful in the sight of God. Who arranges all these details and carries them into effect? Joshua, or rather the Captain beyond Joshua, Jesus, the Saviour, the Son of God.

That is something like the story and what men have thought about it; for it is well known that Joshua, Israel, Jordan, the promised land and the Conquest, are all types, figures, foreshadowings of something real, true, and abiding; even promises of God, which may be appropriated by faith, and used by Christians in their desert journey. When the Captain's sharp sword of Truth cuts away the visible picture, and the symbolism that surrounds the story; then it is felt that, in a new form, He has once more appeared among men. Moses is dead; and the authority that surrounded Moses has vanished away. In other words, law, in the sense of Mosaism, is without life, and being dead, it is powerless and without authority. This is a tremendous revolution in thought; at the first glance it seems to mean a return to chaos, darkness, and death. This is the outlook from experience, empiricism, and, it may be, in a sense, from intellectual labours, moral governments, and varied forms of theology.

In reality this is not so ; what men see, and are much troubled by what they see, is the fruition of their labours ; only they have been blind to what the Lord, the Captain of Salvation, has been accomplishing, and in what way the labours of the past are to be made effectual for the carrying out of the great work in which He has been engaged in past ages. It is time for men to try to conceive this humiliating thought, that they are not really half so clever as they think themselves to be ; they are not even wise nor good, though oftentimes their subtlety for evil has been demonstrated. The fact seems to be that men do not discover truth ; it is actually infused, inspired, and enforced into them, by many bitter experiences ; they pass through whole cycles of revelation as if blindfolded, and they have not even the ghost of a conception of what they are doing, why they are so occupied, or what the results of their labours will be ? These are extraordinary statements to make ; they are totally opposed to the conceptions of men of this world ; and without doubt they would be inclined to question the sanity of any man who would express such thoughts. The question now to be considered is whether such a statement can be justified in the light of science, philosophy, and the method of Christ ?

Here it will be advisable to follow the order of Christ's method by questions, and see what results will follow in the light of His presence ; with that double-edged sword drawn that pierces through signs, flesh, and word, to the very spirit that lives and breathes within the work. Whence this Joshua, the Captain of Israel ? He was born in Egypt ; he was redeemed from bondage ; he fought against Amalek ; he was with Moses for forty days on the Mountain of law ; he was the student in the Tabernacle ; he was one of the spies to spy out the land, and gave a true report of all he had seen ; and as the successor of Moses, the spirit of Moses rested upon him, and he became the leader of Israel. When did Joshua take the place for which he was prepared, and to which he was appointed ? At the set time, and in due order ; at the right time he was taught by the true Captain what his position really was ; he was not *the* Captain, he was the Captain's shadow, His servant, to do his Will ; to carry out this bit of work, then due for the development of mankind. Why was Joshua entrusted with this work in place of Moses ? Why not Caleb, or Eleazar, or any other man ? Here it is wise not to attempt to give any reply to such questions. With these things men are not called to trouble



themselves ; it is surely enough that the Holy Spirit has so ordered, designed, purposed, and carried out this amazing work of grace and salvation, surpassing the comprehension of men. If He is pleased to call Abraham, Moses, or Joshua, it is well ; it is for them to obey, to plead for grace and wisdom to fit them to do that work entrusted to them, even though they do not understand the relations of their little part to the whole realm of the kingdom of Grace. What is this revelation to men that is incarnate in Joshua ; that has lived and moved before men for ages, to which they have been as blind men, unable to perceive what was before their very eyes ? This seems to be the explanation ; it is in a measure psychological, but spiritually it is a truth of the first importance. What is Joshua ? Even what he has become in his life and by his experiences. But what does this mean ? Is not this the measure of every man ? And is it not thus that even Moses is measured ? Exactly, it is thus men measure Moses as lawgiver, guide, teacher, servant under authority ; but it is not so that Joshua is to be measured, or if men attempt to measure him in this way they will make a serious mistake, and not come within sight of a satisfactory answer to the problem. The conception in Mosaism is ever in this direction, receive, discover, find out a law of nature, morals, grace ; and when that law is conceived, write it down, make it obligatory, enforce upon men their duties as revealed by law ; and with these laws let there ever follow in their train pains and penalties. Mosaism is an order outside man, a standard that man has found by experience or experiment ; something in a sense discovered or revealed ; but being known it ought to be conformed to and obeyed ; in fact, it is folly, madness, to enter into a struggle with law, the lawless offender must be punished ; and he will be whether he transgresses through ignorance, or sins wilfully against knowledge of law. Is not this the interpretation of the voice of science at the present time in a way never observed in former ages ? Some scientific thinkers have, in a sense, gone beyond Moses ; they have made a god of law ; and it may be have partly concluded that there is no God but law. It is just here that the voice from Joshua transcends Mosaism and scientific enquiry ; this man Joshua is, in symbol, a stage of thought beyond outward form and inductive enquiry ; law in him is transcendent, and it is transfigured ; he has received it all into his own soul, and in the convergence it has flashed into the pure white light of truth.

Law is no longer a rule to guide life ; it is both light and life ; it is truth and moral law in a pure, holy, moral man. But this objection may be raised : this is pure idealism. Joshua had no idea that he embodied or symbolised such a conception of the Divine development in history ; and it may be supposed that he would have repudiated such an ideal as not conforming to his own thoughts and actions. Upon this point there need not be any discussion ; as has been pointed out, the common experience in the kingdom of Grace, and also in the lower kingdoms is, that the actors do not know the parts that they are acting ; and they have no conception of the vast issues that may arise from their words and actions. Moses sought for law ; and law to him was the objective word, act, and authority. Joshua was told that for him law was written upon heart, soul, mind, conscience, in word, hand, foot, gesture, movement, in fact in everything that he thought, said, and did. Is this incomprehensible ? Whatever it may be, it seems certain that this will be the revelation to men in the near future ; they cannot escape from it ; on every side it is pressing in upon them ; men cannot rest in the chaos and darkness of ignorance ; in the ever-changing forms that cannot abide ; in order, whether mechanical and natural, or Divine and spiritual. Beyond law, within and around law, the very embodiment of law, men will find Joshua, Jesus Christ, God, in fact, the Ultimate whose Will is law ; and His law is Truth and Righteousness, Grace, and Love. Is it difficult to grasp this thought in the microcosm of a man ? Then let it be wrought out in terms of science, in the microcosm of being ; the story is the same, chaos, darkness, light, law, light and life, the world and all it contains, the universe and all that exists ; these are the expressed Will of God, in fact, His Spirit, as expressed in order and law. How is this conception to find its way into the souls of men ? The method is that of the Spirit of God ; and it is the Bible that reveals this onward development from a garden, a seed, a promise, a covenant, a land, law, grace, onward to the New Jerusalem that descends from Heaven ; or the scientific conception of the fulfilment of all the promises of God, in that state thought of as heaven, where all that is thought, said, and done by man will be in conformity with law. Not as man subject to law, and compelled to obey ; but law as the very nature of man's being, in which he delights to obey in the spirit of love. The form of the solution of the problem for children is to be found in the book of Joshua ; it is summed up in conquering the usurping powers that

make men sensual and selfish ; in taking possession of what is recovered from the enemy ; and as dividing the land to the families and tribes of Israel. Who is it that is really represented in this story ? Upon this point there should not be any doubt ; it is not Joshua ; it is that Captain who appeared to Joshua at Jericho, and who appeared later in history as the Man Jesus Christ. It is Joshua that symbolises pure intellect and moral man, as truth and law ; but, as the symbol disappears, the form of the Son of God appears, the True and Faithful Commander of the people of God in all generations. Of course, this vision is not for the unbelieving, or for any who are on the side of Canaan, the earthly, the sensual, and natural ; it is for the servants of God, whose hearts have been cleansed from sin, whose wills are set for the Lord's work, and who, of set purpose, fight by spiritual means for God's cause and kingdom. Whereunto does this vision tend ? The reply is found in the closing chapters of the book ; the land is not the ultimate purpose of the promises ; it is but a means toward the end ; it is not the land that is blessed but the people ; and they are blessed when they love truth, act righteously, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. If they depart from this ideal of life, tell lies, do wickedly, become cruel, worship idols, and forget God, their Redeemer ; then the land will again lie under the curse ; Israel will be degraded as into a heathen Canaan, and those to whom the promises and the promised land were given, will become slaves and bondmen, the outcasts from the true Commonwealth of Israel.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES.—The closing verses in the book of Joshua point out very clearly that Joshua was not hopeful as to the future of Israel and their faithfulness to God, truth and duty. Even at the period before his death there was a tendency to degradation, to lack of enterprise, and thus the last meeting with the people, the covenant, and the great stone witness, ever silent, yet a stern witness against Israel in the days of perversion, idolatry, and the denial of God. The age from Egypt to the promised land is ended, the bones of Joseph are laid to rest in Shechem, and Joshua and Eleazar are dead. There is not one left of that generation who remembered Egypt and its slavery. It has been suggested that Joshua represents, in a special manner, intellectual power, as subject to the moral nature, the reason as redeemed, trained, sanctified by manifold experiences ; as endowed with power to serve God, even as the intellect of man should do for a true and righteous life ; and, for the conquest, the over-

throw of all that is false, idolatrous, wicked, contrary to the Will of God. This conception may lead to another of great value in this direction ; it is by this power that all true relations of thought are discerned and put in order ; and thus the intellect analyses its own order, and attempts that which science and philosophy have attempted in these days ; even to limit the reasoning powers, and to conceive the means by which the Ultimate—God—is pleased to take the form of a related ultimate, and thus begin the process of development. The meaning is this : There appeared on earth an Adam, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Moses, Joshua ; and these were, in a sense, the products of the past. The first and last of a cycle of time may be linked together, as they truly are, but the successor shoots up into a range of thought far beyond his predecessor ; he consummates all the past, and becomes the father, the type, of a new age. This is the living truth to be discerned in Joshua ; the man is not only scholar and servant of Moses, he becomes the light to illuminate the thoughts and laws of Moses ; he possesses all that Moses possessed, but he is, in a sense, greater, more spiritual, and he lives, makes manifest a life, different from that of Moses. It is thus with Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Christ ; they are in one succession in the living kingdom of Grace, and yet each embodies a different concept ; they are, in scientific language, new types of life, suddenly revealed to men ; they live among men, but they are not like other men ; they present to them an ideal, and for generations that ideal type operates so that it may permeate and produce in men that which they typify. It is instinctively felt that Joshua as an ideal is not the fruit of his age ; he is a spiritual type ; and it will only be when men can understand what these new types mean that they will apprehend the true order of development in the kingdom of Grace. It is to be understood that this type of the true intellect and of the moral nature in the fear and love of God, carries with it moral purity and integrity of heart ; they cannot exist separately ; to know truly involves the greater thought of acting righteously. This is the ideal ; this is what ought to be, and this is what Joshua represents in moral development. He fulfils Isaac, the germ in Genesis, and that germ seed is involved in the history of a nation and commonwealth. It may be observed in the language of development, that light has flashed forth ; men have been privileged to see, to contemplate, even to reason upon this Divine ideal ; but with the light from heaven there was also the descent of

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life ; this life has entered the mass of Israel as a nation, and the problem to be wrought out is in what way this life will work, and what the results will be in the future ?

It is not necessary to study in detail this historical book of Judges and the experiences of Israel as a commonwealth for hundreds of years ; it will be sufficient to glance at the leading episodes, and to ask in the light of the Method of Christ, what these things mean ? The story is plain and the notable events are not numerous ; they may be summed up in the intellectual and moral deterioration of Israel ; inter-marriages of Israelites with Canaanites ; forgetfulness of God, the King ; the forsaking of true and spiritual worship ; and spiritual degradation by the worshipping of idols, the gods of the heathen nations. The consequences were, subjection and bondage to the nations whose gods they served ; and thus in succession Israel is seen under the heel of Mesopotamia, in the thralldom of Moab, subject to Canaan, overrun by Midian ; in a state of civil strife ; harassed by fierce Ammon ; enslaved by the Philistines ; and at last reduced to anarchy, when the position is summed up in the last verse of the book, " In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." It may be suggested here for consideration that the nations thus mentioned, in their order, are not simply those that subjected Israel to thralldom in the days of the Judges ; there appears to be a historic order of a prophetic kind ; and thus it is conceivable that this moral struggle stretches from Babylonia before the days of Abraham, as representing the Nimrod stamp of rule, onward throughout history ; the realm of thought being moral, as the government of man by men over their fellows. The past and future are summed up in this sevenfold degradation of Israel under other nations. The analogues would run thus : Mesopotamia and Babylonia ; Moab and Chaldea, in the sense of that state of Chaldea about 2,000 B.C., when Haran died there and Terah and his sons migrated to Syria ; Canaan and the period of the patriarchs in the promised land ; Midian, the power of Egypt and civil strife of the desert ; Ammon and the period of the Judges ; the Philistines and the kingdom under Saul ; and the moral anarchy in subsequent history from Solomon to the downfall of Israel. This is not a new or different method of interpretation ; the assumption throughout all the generations is that they are retrospective and prospective—the germ seed, the flower and fruit are continuous, and

they are all involved in Genesis, and developed in history in their own separate and distinct realms and order. For example, the generations of Adam extend in germ from Adam to Noah, ten generations ; but these, as they are developed, carry with them new principles and orders of thought, and they appear to be the direct generations of Adam. The appearance is similar to the naturalistic conception of the student of the physical sciences ; to him evolution is one ; and his wish is to explain, by the simple monistic law of evolution, that nature is one and indivisible as a natural order from the power named Force.

Passing from the natural to the spiritual, the region lying beyond things seen and temporal, it may be useful to look at this period of history in the light of the method of Christ by the usual questions. Whence this condition of matters as portrayed in the Book of Judges ? As the moral condition of man, it can be traced backward in history to the sin of disobedience in Eden ; and it is there that men will find the seed and the root of what is made a special study at this period in the history of the development of Israel. When did these things take place ? During time. And it is a special fact, never to be forgotten, that this realm of evil is as historically true as the kingdom of Grace ; they may be said to run on parallel lines. At one time there is Divine intervention, light from heaven, a short period when men almost hope that the Day of God and the kingdom of Heaven is come ; but, just as surely as night follows day, so the night of darkness and evil returned again ; light and dark get mixed in a gloaming, or glooming, time, and then the gross darkness, and there is no light from heaven and no voice from God. This evil power is personified in many ways : as the serpent, evil, devil, darkness, death ; and the latest conceptions are a Man of sin, the great Dragon, and Satan. Why have these things been permitted by God ? The secret things belong to God ; and those that are revealed belong to men. To question the wisdom of God in this, or in any matter, could not be justified for a single moment ; it is surely plain, as plain as truth can show it to be, that man is not, and never has been, in a position through ignorance and sinfulness to form or express an opinion on such a subject that would be of any value. Let it be granted that his first state was that of innocence, then there lay before him a cycle of education and experience ; living within the realm of moral law as interpreted by love and childlike obedience, as of duty to a father, until

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manhood should be attained. With the inrush of sin, and the foul dark domain of evil, man has been incompetent to form a just judgment, and until he is able to see all things in the light of Christ and His Word, he may well keep silence about things he does not understand. It is, however, clearly proved by history that men have recognised their duties and responsibilities, that they have failed to meet the requirements of law, in their own nature, as ethical truth, or as a revelation with authority from God. It is, therefore, conclusive that they are in a position to condemn themselves; and even amongst heathen nations there is the conviction that if men seek God, cry to Him for help, truly repent, and do what is true and right, God will hear and save. The less and more of this knowledge may not be of so much importance as men think. Christ seems to sum up the point in few words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." But, men may ask, Why is it that these repeated failures take place; and, instead of the condition of mankind improving, things seem to get worse, and the conflict more intense as the development rises from lower to higher conditions? It would seem that men are now in a position to fairly consider these points, and, it may be, reach a definite conclusion. It can now be seen that nature, man, the constitution of the universe, have been, in the past, conceived under childlike forms of thought. Science has been as a veritable electric light from heaven; men have been awakened to new far-reaching methods of thought; and thus the conception of development has taken the place of that of special creation. It is as if men were living in a narrow, dark valley, with ranges of mountains surrounding them; but, because of clouds and mist, the mountain-tops had never been seen by mortal man. A change came, the clouds and mist gradually passed away, and then, to the amazement of the beholders, there was seen range upon range of mountains reaching even to the heavens. It is conceivable that the men in that narrow valley would form opinions about their own little world, and be confident that their conceptions were true and right; but the new light, and the great revelation from heaven, would confound them, and the result would be that they would require to go to school again to learn new lessons; or assert that what was seen was mirage or illusions. The testimony of development is that moral man is the consummation of moral development in a moral creation; and that the length of time from fire-mist, or the

first appearance of physical life upon the earth to moral man is ages upon ages ; finite time truly, but, so far as man can reckon, almost infinite. The thought is conceived that the moral man sinned, and the result was moral chaos and spiritual darkness ; and it is from this state that the re-creation of the moral man begins ; the ideal being not as some men think by a momentary conversion, as the choice of a man, but by a marvellous, almighty work of grace in Christ by the Holy Spirit, in which conscious conversion is certainly recognised, as the experience of a man ; but salvation for mankind and redemption, as facts of development, transcend the thoughts of men. It is further conceived that in this mighty struggle betwixt good and evil, God and the devil, man cannot help himself ; he is the bond-thrall of evil ; and even if for a time, by special intervention, and by continuous grace, man seems to advance and at times get the better of his great enemy, it is to feel, and find that, apart from Christ, His grace and Holy Spirit, it is impossible to break these bonds and regain moral liberty in the light of God and love. It is the stern fact, whether men believe it or not, that mankind is a moral ruin ; that man, as a son of Adam, is in a state of moral chaos ; and that apart from Christ the moral nature, as perfect manhood, cannot be restored to mankind or to a man. It will be observed that this argument is not that of experience or of theology ; it is not against the simple assertion of a man that he is not a moral wreck, and that he cannot believe these things to be true ; neither is it contrary to that of a newly converted man, who will maintain that by his act of faith he has been saved from evil. This problem is not so simple ; it is far more complex in its order, and it includes all these varied conceptions which seem even to be contradictory. It should not be difficult to understand that the feelings, the remorse of a well-trained moral man, in the worldly sense, would be far more acute, painful, unbearable even, than that of an ignorant man, whose morality is that of his environment ; it is because he knows truth, and seeks to love righteousness, that the moral fall is so poignant, and the man condemns himself for his folly or his wickedness. The moral condition of Israel in Egypt is not the same as the moral condition of Israel under the Judges ; betwixt these come Moses, Joshua, and God's promises fulfilled ; and thus the moral culpability of Israel in Canaan was far greater than that of Egypt. The problem is that of moral re-creation ;

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a true, perfect, moral, gracious Saviour and deliverer had not appeared among men, all the revelations of the past and men's experiences were developments preparing the way for His coming ; and until then the true meaning of all that was taking place could not be understood by them. The Holy Spirit has a design, purpose realm of grace in operation ; and when men are so developed as to become truly moral in the image of God, in the spirit of love, then they will understand what this work of the Spirit has been throughout the ages. What is this condition of men morally ? Is not this the reply of the Book of Judges to the question ? He ought to be morally true and upright, and he is not ; he ought to love and serve God, and he does not ; he ought not to intermarry with those who are the avowed enemies of God, and serve their gods ; he ought to be wise, good, truthful, kind, and devoted to the commonweal, and not tolerate strife, schism or anarchy ; and in all these matters the men of Israel were examples of what they ought not to be or do ; in fact, spiritually they were as the carnal wicked Canaanites, and they were not the Israel of God. How was it that Israel was thus selfish, self-asserting, traitorous, and unworthy to be called the Israel of God ? They did not retain the knowledge of the love and mercy of God in their hearts ; they were not grateful to their King and Lord ; they did not study and observe the laws of Moses given to them ; they did not remember Joshua, truth, the moral law, duty, the great struggle for the land and the blessings enjoyed. They chose the darkness and not the light ; they preferred evil and not good ; the natural and not the spiritual ; and being what they were, what they chose to be, it followed that they reached the degradation of the heathen among the heathen ; they fell to their level, and that was to superstitious ignorance and moral chaos. Who delivered this people when they were in trouble, became repentant, cried for help, and prayed for deliverance from their enemies in their days of trouble and darkness ? The Lord sent them deliverers and judges ; and time after time they were delivered from their enemies, but they had no moral strength ; they were psychic, not moral, in their thoughts and actions ; they feared the whip and punishment ; the love and fear of God did not rule their hearts ; they inherited and possessed a land promised ; they did not inherit and possess truth, righteousness and love ; and these, as the promised inheritance, was not within their own souls, they were not moral men in the likeness of God and Christ. Whither

it may be asked, does all this tend ? It is not to be assumed that because Israel failed under the Judges that in any sense the purpose of God failed. It may fairly be assumed that all these things are within the wide range of the purpose of God's kingdom of Grace, and that what seems to man to be a failure is not so ; it is a stepping stone toward the next forward movement ; the development proceeds without fail ; and it is just as sure that the kingdom of Grace will be triumphant and regnant upon the earth, and that men will be changed to be like God, as that in the creation series of movements the end was man in the likeness of God. In the moral chaos in the days of the Judges, it was not possible for men to reach this lofty conception of the great work of God in the re-creation of the race of man ; but apart from Christ and His method of Truth, His kingdom of Grace, what better are men, named Christians, in the twentieth century, A.D. ? There is a similar intellectual moral chaos, the spiritual atmosphere being quite different, but morally and intellectually, is not the result chaos ?

## CHAPTER V.

### THE KING AND ORDER OF THE KINGDOM.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.—In briefly following the order of development, there will not be any attempt made to consider the details of the story of Samuel, the kingdom, and the kings of Israel. It will be found helpful to consider what the position is assumed to be ; what may be looked for ; and what form this new revelation will take. Thus far the explanation has been along the lines of moral development ; and it has been assumed that the order is like that of physical life, only spiritual in its conditions. It has been assumed that development has taken place in physical forms ; in psychic conceptions ; in intellectual and moral inquiries into truth, righteousness and law, as objective standards, as in Mosaism ; and in Joshua the great conception was reached, that here was to be found the outstanding type of a true, sanctified, intellectual warrior, the master of truth, and as coincident with that love of truth, a moral nature in harmony with the divine ideal. The Book of Judges has been compared to the long night of moral darkness and ignorance ; and in that night there is no break of dawn visible upon the horizon of the commonwealth of Israel. The moral theocracy of God in [a commonwealth is near its end, and men may well say that this method of government, as by a theocratic system of rule, is a total failure ; it is no better, it may be even worse, than other forms which men have tried. But is not this reasoning very foolish ; who has a right to say that this was a true theocratic government, and that it was carried on according to Divine law ? It was a commonwealth as compared with a kingdom ; but that it was God's ideal of the government of men by men is not true ; in fact, the Book of Judges is a continuous testimony and protest against the conception that this was God's commonwealth. If, for example, all the men in Israel had been like Joshua in thought, word, and deed, then there would have been a common-

wealth that God could acknowledge ; but this was not so ; and, therefore, it is not right to assume that this theocracy reveals the Will of God for the government of men in a nation. The position is altogether different ; the assumption is that men trained under Moses and Joshua ought to have been able to govern themselves ; the presumption is that they are men and have attained to manhood, therefore let them try their hands at this work, and by their actions prove themselves to be men in the likeness of God. This is the meaning of man and manhood ; every man is to be as Joshua ; if he is not, then he has not attained to manhood. Is not this to expect too much from sinful men ; how could they be expected to attain to this perfect manhood, at such a time, and under such conditions ? It is useless to begin to make excuses for the frail, the weak and sinful ; the question asked, and the problem to be solved, is this, Is Israel true and moral ? Or, will the people be able to learn this lesson that they are unable to attain to truthfulness and perfect moral manhood under their earthly environment ? If man is moral and true, he is man ; if not, then he has not attained to manhood ; he is lower than man, like a subtle serpent, or a wild beast, or a lazy sloth, but not a man in the likeness of God.

This seems to be the problem for Israel at the end of the commonwealth ; it is the problem for men now ; and it is quite as pressing upon thoughtful men in Europe in 2000, A.D., as it was for Israel in 1200 B.C. It is not theocracy, democracy, aristocracy, republic, or limited forms of Government, in any form, that men can devise ; it is men, living, true, righteous, moral men, who have attained to manhood, God likeness, that the age calls for, and they are not to be found anywhere ; men are anything and everything, except God's men ; and thus the true theocracy, the kingdom of God on earth, is impossible under such conditions. This is the lesson from the Book of Judges ; the condition is chaos, darkness, night ; every man is an atom doing his own will, trying to compel others, and thus becoming repelling forces keeping the moral world in a state that is the opposite of the kingdom of God in moral order, perfect righteousness, and harmony with the Divine Will in truth and love. It is surely time to realise this truth that man morally, and states politically and morally, as governments, cannot redeem themselves from the powers of evil. Through sin moral law is weak, it wrestles with evil age after age, and the results are ever the

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same, it is evil that reigns. The connecting bond of the Divine Love is lost ; the Divine moral order is shattered into a thousand pieces ; it is chaos, not order ; the forces are repellent, not attractive, and if men think that they are going to make a kingdom of God out of this ruin by their moral efforts it is evident that they do not understand in any true, moral sense what they are trying to do.

What then was the expectation of Israel in the past ; and, in what direction do men look now for redemption from the powers of evil ? Israel got tired of the theocracy and longed for a kingdom of man, not a kingdom of God ; they actually degraded themselves to ask that God should be dethroned ; and that the heathen nations round about them, and their kings and methods of government, should become their models. What men desire now it is impossible to say ; the range of vision is from a papal theocracy, and imperial despotism all round the forms of government, to complete anarchy ; truth, order, morality, righteousness are not discernible ; every man is his own god ; and every man is ready to kill every other god who dares to interfere with his freedom of thought and liberty of action. If men think that this fearful disease is going to be cured by ethical, or any other, pills or potions, they are living in a fool's paradise ; the heart is faint, the body is covered with sores, there is little vitality left, and thus the question, Is there no physician that can heal ? Is there no remedy that can be applied to heal these almost putrid sores that can be seen upon the body politic ? There is a Physician able and willing to heal ; but there are conditions laid down that must be observed before medicine and advice can be of any use for the perfect healing of such a diseased system.

If then the utter uselessness of ethical palliatives or political nostrums is seen, it may be worth while to try to find out, by the method of Christ and the teaching of the Holy Spirit in the Word, what the true remedy for sin is, and how it ought to be applied. It is clear enough that all this portion of the Bible is a fulfilment of the generations of Isaac ; or of Isaac as resident in the land, the inheritor of the promises of God ; but it is not quite so easy to trace this development in Genesis, and to apply it to the nation of Israel. It may be pointed out that there can be traced two distinct periods, the one from the conception and birth of the twin sons, Esau and Jacob, which deals with the birthright, the sojourn in the land, the Philistines, and the strife

about wells, closing with the remarks about Esau being forty years of age, and that he had married two women of the Hittite race, and that this was a grievance to Isaac and Rebekah ; and the next portion goes on to deal with the blessing and what the two brothers did to obtain what they both desired. It may not be very easy to discern that this division is of importance in the story in Genesis ; or that it has any connection with this critical stage in the nation of Israel ; but it may be that careful study will show that the story in Genesis and the history in Israel synchronise together. The first portion deals with the birthright possessed by Isaac, of which Esau is the natural heir ; and which Esau despised and sold for a mess of pottage ; the second deals with the blessing, the Divine purpose, which Isaac would have given to Esau ; but which Esau did not receive through the subtlety of Rebecca and the connivance of Jacob. Esau expected the blessing and lost it ; Jacob had his eye specially on the birthright, the eldest son's portion, and thus, although the blessing was bestowed upon Jacob, it did not come as he expected or desired ; and, in fact, when Christ, the Blessing, came, then Judah, the Jews, as representing Jacob, rejected Him, and thus lost birthright and blessing. To follow these details may be a little difficult even to those who are familiar with Scripture ; and it may well be that this interpretation will not be easy to follow. These details, however, do synchronise ; they are like in appearance ; and the age of Esau, forty years, as a period, or age, in Scripture, concludes with this fatal union with the race of Canaan, the Hittites.

Here it would seem as if the student stumbles upon one of those strange transpositions of names and persons that is peculiar to the Bible, and which require careful study to apprehend what they mean ; as Adam and the second Adam or Christ ; the elder and younger brothers and the birthright ; law and grace ; the natural and the spiritual ; these are examples of this transposition, so that by these men may come to see that the first will be changed to last, and that the last will, in the long run, become first. Students are familiar with the Apostle Paul's exposition that Israel in the Desert is Ishmael ; that Hagar represents Egypt and Mount Sinai, and that the Law, or Mosaism, is not inheritance, or promise but the spiritual Ishmael being made manifest upon the prophetic lines of the child Ishmael in Genesis. Is it to be conceived that in the generations of Isaac there is to

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be found another allegory of a similar kind ; and that this Israel of the Judges is Esau not Jacob ? It is to be remembered that Isaac and his generations live throughout the whole period of the residence in Palestine ; and he dies when Jacob returns to Mamre, or Hebron, after the birth of Benjamin at Bethlehem. There is another way of looking at this story : the twin sons are conceived in the same womb ; they live in the same home ; they dwell in the same land ; they both desire to possess the same birth-right and blessing ; and it may be said of them both that they had no spiritual conception of what the birthright or blessing meant. The germs in Genesis do not give a large outline to the generations in their fulfilment in Israel ; yet the drawing may be sufficient to indicate that the design and purpose are the same, and that what is found in Israel in the nation, is germinal in Isaac in Genesis. The likeness betwixt Isaac and Joshua is not difficult to trace ; Joshua lives when he enters the land ; he is like Isaac, and he inherits the land. The conception is that of expansion ; the promise in, and to, Isaac is fulfilled ; and his children in the same womb, home, and land live together. Esau is the elder brother, the heir, the man of business, the man who prizes things seen and tangible ; he is sensuous, it may be sensual ; but he is not like Joshua in his intellectual, moral, or spiritual nature. This is his character ; he is a Saul-like king, he may become grave and wise with the experiences of life ; but Esau is worldly, a fit representative of the elder brother. Here let it be remembered that the study is not outward and physical, Esau the man ; it is Esau the moral spirit as he is portrayed in the history of Isaac and of Israel. The spirit of Esau reigns in all that is visible ; in all that is moral, as visible government ; the spirit of Jacob reigns in the psychic as the religious ; the reign of Esau extends from the Judges to the fall of Jerusalem and the Captivity, ending in a sense in the Herods ; and the reign of Jacob is co-existent, reaching beyond the Captivity to the coming of Christ and the dispersion of the Jews in the world. The outlook here is very extensive ; it is Israel political, psychical, intellectual, and moral ; and at the very heart of it is Isaac, or Christ ; and the visible signs are Esau the man and king as secular ; and Jacob the king and high priest.

With this explanation it may be more easy to follow the order of development in the Old Testament ; the intellectual and moral have failed to bring salvation to Israel ; it is with Israel as with

the creation, fallen man in Eden, the Flood, the tower of Babylon, and Egypt ; again it is chaos and darkness ; and, unless it please God to say, " Let there be Light," the darkness must continue, there cannot come a kingdom of God and of Grace for men ; and that for the simplest of all reasons, men do not possess light, and therefore it cannot radiate forth from them. The next onward movement in history, it will be seen, must be different in its order ; at the moral stage of culture, if man fails, his failure is complete, simply because the moral ruin remains, and the end is death in the darkness. What men require here is the grace that is rooted in love ; it is Hannah or Mary, and what they represent ; it is the indwelling Spirit of God longing to be born, to be able to express the grace, mercy, and love of God for those who cannot help themselves. It is divine grace crying for a son-child in bitterness of soul, and weeping and vowing that if such a gracious gift be given by God for men, it will be given again back to Him, consecrated with a mother's love, for the service of God. This is one aspect of this far-reaching truth ; it is God's Spirit in the heart of consecrated motherhood moved to the keenest travail of soul for those they love. It is motherhood superseding manhood ; it is the divine in woman forcing a way past man, signs and governments, to take hold of the feet of God ; and there to find mercy, grace, love, hope, joy, and peace. The other aspect is the awful spiritual darkness that surrounds men ; the materialising of the spiritual and the religious, the flickering light of grace and truth that a little child may extinguish ; but there are no men left to trim the lamp, and keep it bright ; it is the little child that keeps the silent watch ; and it is whilst tending the dying lamp in the night that the Voice of God is once more heard in Israel ; and a new vision of God is given to men. This is the story of Samuel ; the one asked for and given ; the prayer and the answer ; the spirit of mercy and love moving as by an irresistible impulse and desire in a woman to seek for, and find, this divine Seed of Grace ; the symbol or sign, of the Blessing above all blessings, the Gift of God, the Life Eternal.

It is Samuel that is given to Israel when Israel is ready to die, destroyed by anarchy, and under the tyranny of the Philistine lords ; it is Samuel that hears the Voice of God as a child listens to the voice of a father ; it is Samuel that becomes priest, ruler and judge in Israel ; and in a special sense, Samuel is revealed as the seer, the prophet, the word of God to men. In these special



aspects he differs from Moses, Joshua or any of the judges ; he is all that they have been with this special gift, he sees further than other men ; and he hears the voice that no other man can hear in Israel. It is upon this man that the kingdom in Israel rests as a visible organisation, or building, for he is the foundation stone. Moses as law, and Joshua as truth and moral law in love, are involved in him ; he is all that they were, and more, because he is the seer, the prophet, the word of God made manifest before men as grace and truth. This is the ideal of the man Samuel ; he is the word of God to men in grace and love at this stage of development ; he is as unique in his own place and time as Abraham, Moses, or Joshua ; he is like Isaac, with a wider horizon ; and he is the image of the Word of God, the perfect Seer, Prophet, Priest, and King of mankind. The law makes priests that have infirmities, that commit sin, that die ; the visible order of the kingdom of grace has a founder who becomes old and is unfit for service, and his successors turn aside after wealth, take bribes, and pervert judgment. It is so even within the realm of grace ; those who are saved by grace fall away from the state of grace ; they fail and fall like other men ; even as moralists and wise men do ; " there is none righteous, no not one ; " truly there is no room for boasting ; only by grace can men stand, and without grace salvation is impossible. It was for this reason that Israel turned from the graceless sons of grace, and asked Samuel to make them a king, so that their king might rule and judge Israel in the same way as other nations. Here is the end of an ideal theocracy and a divine kingdom of grace ; men will not have these ; they will have a despotic ruler ; they are mere children and children they wish to remain. Let the king's strong back bear the burden ; let the king's strong arm punish the wicked ; let all this be the king's business ; let him have the honour and glory of kingship, then the people can mind their own business and play their games, or enjoy themselves as they please. This is not the ideal in the kingdom of Grace ; to choose thus is to reject the sign, and King of Grace ; it is to fall from the gracious ideal to psychic time serving, selfish conceptions, and to a moral platform already proved to be without power for salvation. But, this objection may be raised ; why harp on this string of grace, grace, when what men want in a government is truth, moral rectitude, justice and judgment ? Why indeed ? Is it not evident that in the very nature of things it must be so ; and that without reaching, by some means, the root of this problem,

it is plain that, in the truest sense, no man, or state, can be saved? It is no use to try to interpret this as meaning that the church is to be above the state; it is more likely to be that church and state, as men know them, are both to be swept away, so that what is true and righteous, good and gracious, may take their place. When the people of Israel appealed to Samuel to make a king to rule over them it was an appeal against the church, as Levites, or as priests; but, as Samuel told them, it was at the same time a rejection of God their sole King and Redeemer. Saul is a fair type of the kind of king men choose; his career is like that of most kings; there have been some better; there have been many worse; he is a fair sample of the elder brother, of a king of Edom; he is not a king in the kingdom of Grace, and thus it is not necessary to consider Saul as king of Israel any further. With David, the shepherd, as king it is different; this younger brother is hated and persecuted by Saul; he dooms his successor to death, and yet David survives Saul; unites the distracted country; overcomes his enemies; is said to be a man after God's heart, or likeness; he is prophet and poet, king and judge, and yet he is not perfect; he is a man of war; and he is judged to be unworthy and unfit to build a House for God in Israel, even though such a thought was cherished in his soul. It is his son Solomon, the peaceful king, who will build the House of God in the City of Peace, and thus the finger of destiny points forward to an age yet to come, when a son of David will reign in truth, righteousness and peace, over that kingdom of Grace which will be true and right in spirit and good and gracious in word and deed. This kingdom of Grace in Israel it will be seen is a very complex study; it is an outward and visible representation of a kingdom that will become inward and invisible; the outward forms, signs, actions, are as a physical realm upon which men look; these become psychic thoughts, ideas, concepts, matters of inward experience; and further development must follow in the order of the kingdom of grace until the spiritual is made fully manifest; here men gaze upon reflected pictures as in a mirror; but the day will come when things will be seen face to face and spirit to spirit. It is not necessary to enter into further details here by following the method of Christ, these would require much careful study. It will be observed that the development in the kingdom is like to that in the commonwealth, there is a sudden interposition in Samuel and David onward progression, a culmination in victory.

The revelation is made, men are left to study what they have seen ; they are left so that they may prove themselves ; if they are men they will prove their manhood by living and doing what is right, in the true spirit of moral law, and show themselves to be the children of God by possessing that spirit found in Samuel the seer of Israel. The end of the kingdom of Israel came by division and strife, idolatry and demoralisation, hatred and war. Israel would not serve God ; the nation would not accept the King, the Redeemer ; and thus the end was the destruction of city and temple ; the bitter experiences of war and famine, disease and death, and that cruel captivity in Babylon and the East. The end once more is chaos and the darkness ; the curtain falls upon the seventy years captivity ; the inheritance is desecrated by the enemies of God, and apparently the promises of God are not to be fulfilled ; the nation is as if it were dead, cast out from the presence of God and without altar, priest or temple.

In forming these conceptions of the kingdom of Israel, as a portion of the great work of God for the re-creation, the salvation of mankind, it is necessary to keep in view the Method of Christ, as revealed in development, and specially to keep the eyes fixed upon the germs of revelation as they are made known in the Book of Genesis. It is quite clear that Abraham and his seed, or generations, are cut off from the great world ; the river of life has taken this special channel, and if men would follow the order of development, they must do so in the way it has pleased God to reveal His mercy and kingdom of grace to mankind. It will not do to assume that God might have done this or that, or made spiritual revelations to other races of men ; these are not the subjects for consideration ; it is simply this question, how has God carried on His work ? and, if men are able to understand it just in the same way as they comprehend the physical sciences ? This conception must never be lost sight of, that this study is scientific, as finding out and following order, and law ; and this is the work kept in view in the study of the physical sciences. As this kingdom of Israel is assumed to be an external, visible, manifestation of the kingdom of grace, in sign and symbol, in historical order, it may be useful to put the usual questions which relate to development in the Method of Christ, and note what results may be obtained by doing so. Whence this kingdom of Grace thus symbolised in the kingdom of Israel ? The soil is Eden ; the cause for revelation, sin, disobedience, with all possible results ; and the Seed of Grace is

the Promise that the Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. There comes another vision of chaos, darkness, sin in the world of mankind, and there rises above all that would destroy the purpose of God's grace, the Ark of Salvation riding in perfect safety over the troubled waters beneath which, by the judgment of God, sin and death are to be found. Another stage of history is surveyed, Nimrod and Asshur have raised their heads and rebelled against God, making to themselves gods of their own devices ; the judgment is confusion, scattering, disunion, chaos, darkness, and night. The patriarch Terah and his family are seen migrating ; by God's call they leave what is judged and condemned ; and to Abraham the command is given to seek for that land, that God would show him, there to become the founder of a truly great nation ; to be blessed, and the means of blessing to all the families of mankind. This blessing is linked with an inheritance and a promised son, the inheritor of the promises. Isaac is that son of promise, and he lived within that inheritance. To his son Jacob, the younger, fell the right to the inheritance by cunning and by over reaching his brother ; and it was through guile and stealth that he obtained the blessing. In other words, all his actions were bad, or false means, to attain a good end, and thus the kingdom in Jacob is not genuine ; it is hollow, mere sign, symbol, anything but the true, the right, the real kingdom of grace. The end is Egypt, and again chaos and darkness. The psychic development Noah to Isaac, is ended, and it would seem that the kingdom of grace is absorbed in Egypt, in the great world. But all these movements only bring the spiritual nearer to men ; it is evident that salvation is not to be found in Babel nor in Egypt ; they are as dead to God, and righteousness, to true religion, in the kingdom of Grace, as the dead that lie beneath the waters of the great flood. The next stage of development is spiritual, it is linked with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph ; but the special link is Abraham through the generations of Ishmael ; in other words, Egypt, Moses, and the Desert. The possession of the land under Joshua is the generations of Isaac, and thus once more Abraham and his son Isaac are linked together in a fulfilment of the promises and the possession of the promised land by Israel. The generations of Isaac are Esau and Jacob ; in the judges there is made manifest, in a sense, Esau, the elder brother ; with the results chaos and darkness and bondage under the Philistines. In the nation there is first the ideal of the true theocracy in Samuel ; second the Esau

spirit of the elder brother in Saul as king ; and third, the younger son, in David, the king, who supplants Saul, and whose son is David's Lord and King. This is the order of development ; it is whence the kingdom of Grace has come with only one link more required to join the two ends ; the Lord in Eden is David's Lord and King ; He is the Beginning and the End of this revelation.

WHEN ? This is time ; history in all its details ; but always history with Him as the First and Last ; and, it is Him by the mighty operations of His Spirit in Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and Samuel ; in all these He works the works of God ; and greater works than these will He do that men may believe, and have no cause to doubt, that He is the Christ the Son of God, the Saviour of the World.

WHY this revelation to a commonwealth of men that are intellectual and moral ? Why this kingdom of Grace as a kingdom of Israel ? These seem to be legitimate questions ; they deal with plan and purpose, they consider means to reach ends, and thus raise the further questions of success or failure. It is needful here to dis sever two lines of thought that get mixed up throughout the story ; and, it may be necessary to consider it to be within the range of possibility that revelation requires to be defined in harmony with the facts, and not according to theories of theology or criticism. The suggestion takes this form ; it is possible that the revelation is of a twofold nature, the one being Divine and the other human ; or perhaps, more clearly defined as a Divine revelation that involves both these forms of revelation. To put the matter more plainly, the revelation in and by Joshua and Samuel is Divine ; there is the special manifestation of types or ideals ; they are set up before men as examples to follow ; the men themselves may not know this truth ; and the people may not understand what is before their eyes ; but seeing that they are intellectual and moral by nature, it is possible for them to discover what is so plainly written, as by the finger of God, upon the words and actions of such men. The revelation in and by men is different in kind ; it is that of men who choose not to obey God ; who will not recognise His authority over them, who will follow their own devious paths and sinful ways, who will subject themselves to the lusts of the flesh, of the eyes, and of the pride of life ; and following these paths though forewarned, and repeatedly warned by God, will persist in their own downward path until they bring themselves into slavery, the thralldom

of evil, the belief of perverse and evil thoughts of God, of His mercy, grace, and truth, the end being chaos, darkness and the dark night of unbelief. This also is a revelation ; it is the revelation of evil ; it is darkness following light, night following day ; and thus the fulfilment of the vision of the first day of creation. It seems clear enough that there is a difference in these two revelations ; the one is the special intervention of God for the salvation of men, time after time, in harmony with the order of development, and for the purpose of carrying on that work among men ; the other is the revelation of evil by men for their own destruction ; and, poor foolish mortals, as they do not understand the purpose of God in His mercy and grace, neither do they understand the powers of evil that enthrall and would destroy them soul and body. In fact, the story of the Garden of Eden, the warning, temptation, sin, and the consequences, are repeated in history over and over again ; and men have not seen that every age has repeated the same story in new forms outwardly, but spiritually in the very same order.

WHAT is the teaching that underlies the commonwealth of Israel, and the kingdom of Grace in Israel ? The thought is in this direction ; this is a true representation of man intellectually, morally, and spiritually ; what he has shown himself to be in intellectual power, in moral manhood, and as a citizen of this kingdom of Grace of which he is a member. He has perverted truth ; he has disobeyed moral law ; and he has done despite to the Spirit of grace. In the spirit of Esau he despised the birthright, in the spirit of Jacob he took it in a selfish manner ; he grasped at the shadow, and lost the substance. In the matter of the blessing both brothers wished to obtain what was merely temporal ; the visible kingdom and the power and glory to be derived therefrom ; and they utterly failed to understand in what way blessing to all the nations was to be conveyed through Israel. As Esau and Jacob were left free to form their conceptions of birthright and blessing, and to use the means they thought best to gain their ends, so judges and kings in Israel were left equally free, and the end was chaos in commonwealth, and kingdom, and the result was the captivity and Babylon.

How did these things take place ? This is what scientific students require to study ; it will be well to remember the suggestion made as to the different forms of revelation, and to study these in their order ; on the one hand, men will find God true and

faithful, righteous and gracious ; on the other, men false, faithless, wicked, and debased idolators. They play a game with one another, flaunting their powers in pride, conceit, self-assertion, love of power, display of wealth, the wisdom of men, and the glory of royalty ; they cheat and are cheated, and when they reap the fruits of their labours, they complain and blame men and God for what they have brought on themselves. There is no doubt about the spiritual fact that throughout all the ages the tree of good and evil has been in the midst ; and because the evil fruit has been beautiful, desirable, and promised to make men wise, like the gods, they have persisted, in the face of all warnings and experiences, to eat of that which is as the apples of Sodom, which turn to ashes in the mouth, and never can give satisfaction or peace.

WHO is it that has been to men their Refuge, Strength, Rock, Light, Life, Saviour, Redeemer, Priest, Friend, and Brother ? Christ alone, and no mortal man. The work of re-creation is His ; the method of development has been in His hands ; the Holy Spirit has been His Power for salvation ; He has controlled the course of history ; He has curbed the powers of evil, and kept them within bounds ; and the end must be that, as truly as God lives, He will bring His work of mercy, His kingdom of Grace and Truth, to the stage of triumphant victory over evil in the earth. If when men were so debased, ignorant, and foolish as to act as they have done throughout history. He has been patient, merciful, and gracious with them, what will the result be when men are awakened to such facts as these, and to see Christ as He is, the Son of God, the Saviour of men, the Redeemer of the world ?

WHITHER do all such thoughts tend ? They point forward in history ; the serpent's head must be crushed even to death ; the inheritance of the saints must be possessed ; the promises must be fulfilled. What is Nebuchadnezzar and his armies ? They are the servants of God to do His will ; and if on the march to destroy they seek to divine what way they will take, then it is the finger of God that points toward Jerusalem. If the Israel within Israel cries to God in the day of sore trouble in Babylon, Media, and Persia ; will He not command His servant Cyrus, and there will be a Restoration of the faithful to the land of Promise ? Is there any thing too hard for the Lord ? Even this Israel may be redeemed and saved, that has sinned against truth, righteousness, and grace ; and, in due time, the Son of the Highest will surely

come and bring the everlasting salvation, and the true spiritual Kingdom of Grace, Mercy, and Peace to mankind.

THE GENERATIONS OF ESAU.—It has been assumed that the generations in Genesis are like silent finger posts standing in the midst of men throughout the centuries ; there has been writing upon them, but the wise men could not read the signs and thus find out what they meant. Perhaps the generations of Esau may, in a sense, be said to be the strangest in the Bible ; this twin-brother of Jacob, son of Isaac, and grandson of Abraham is a scriptural enigma, and it is no easy matter to trace his history, his children and descendants, and his spiritual generations. Ishmael is discovered by his mother, and the prophetic thoughts that surround him, but Esau gets the name of being a mere worldling, it may be, even a reprobate, and only what is worldly is expected from poor Esau. The suspicion will arise that seeing Ishmael is brought into the order of development, if only in the Desert, is it not likely that Esau may also find a special place in history, in the spiritual development of mankind ? It is true that in the order of development the generations of Isaac point forward to the coming of Christ ; and that Joseph is a wonderful type of Christ, in the Book of Genesis, as slave and prisoner, and as interpreter of dreams and ruler over Egypt. In direct spiritual descent Esau and his generations are not to be found ; but it is possible that his generations may be discovered in that series of Books, after the Book of Kings, and before Isaiah, beginning with I. Chronicles, and ending with the Song of Solomon. This series of books are unique in their way ; they are worthy of the most careful study ; they are historically and critically difficult to understand ; and yet in the providence of God, they are where they are in the Christian Bible. In the remarks to be made there is no reference whatever to the historic setting, or to critical questions ; the sole problem is this, Do they respond to the method of Christ ? If they do so then what inference is to be drawn from this spiritual fact ? It is to be taken for granted that these Books are, in a sense, spiritual, that is, intellectual, moral, and religious ; they are not historical records merely, or psychic experiences only ; they convey a veritable spiritual message to men, as general results from wise men during past ages. It is not to be assumed that they are human productions only, they are revelations and messages from God to men ; and, at the same time, they convey instruction, warning, and judgments upon men because of evil. It may be found, on careful



study, that each Book, in the strangest manner, synchronises with the method of Christ; this, however, would be a long study, thus the attention must be confined to the Books in their order, and their responses to the questions in the method of Christ.

With the question **WHENCE?** as applied to the Books of Chronicles, it will be found that the beginning is Adam, and the course taken is by Seth to Noah, Noah and his sons to Abraham; and then the descendants of Abraham, to Israel, and the kingdom of David and Israel. The first Book ends with the greatness of David's kingdom on the earth and his death; the second opens with the glory and wisdom of Solomon his son as king, and the end is the captivity in Babylon and the proclamation of Cyrus, king of Persia, for the return of those who were willing to rebuild the House of God in Jerusalem. Thus in these Books there is an epitome of history from creation to the restoration.

**WHEN** this restoration took place, then the number, or record, of those who returned was recorded in the Book of Ezra. It is a Book that tells how Ezra was helped by God in setting up the altar in Jerusalem; how the work was hindered by the enemies of God; the spirit of Ezra as student, preacher, and teacher; the gratitude of Ezra to God for His great mercies; his sorrow because of sin; his mourning, prayer, and confession of sin; and the reformation that took place through his influence. The matter of chief importance in this story is that by the help of God—Ezra—there is a new movement among the people of God; and what was desecrated is once more consecrated to God by an altar of sacrifice. God is not dead; the promises of God are not dead or forgotten; faith has once more appeared in the land of promise; there is new life in a new branch of that old tree once thought of as dead. It is hardly necessary to point out that there is analogy betwixt Chaldea, Abraham and the arrival in Canaan and the story of Ezra; this is a similar story under new conditions; it is the past made to live again in the sight of men, so that by faith and hope they may once more remember the mercy and grace of God for the salvation of mankind. It is enough to point out that the Altar points beyond the mere altar of sacrifice as an offering from men; for that Altar represents Christ, the Son of God.

With the question **WHY?** the vision is the city of Jerusalem in ruins; the people in great affliction; the walls broken down and the people defenceless. Chaos, darkness, night: and out of

the dark night there is heard the prayer of Nehemiah, in his great sorrow making confession of sin and entreating God to remember the promises given to Moses. It matters little whether men put into this prayer Egypt, Jerusalem, or the human soul, the story is the same ; it is that what ought to be in the divine order is in ruins ; what ought to find a perfect defence in God, His Will and laws, is defenceless ; sin is triumphant, and here men can gaze upon the consequences of their evil ways. Was it Nehemiah in the goodness of his own heart that cried to God at this time ? It was the Holy Spirit in Nehemiah awakening him to the condition of Israel, so that the comfort, grace, mercy, and peace of God might return to the people of God in their sore affliction. God's purpose cannot fail ; the walls of Jerusalem will be rebuilt ; the people will once more hear the Word of God, and through the hearing become repentant, seek the face and favour of God in truth and righteousness ; turn from every evil way and seek to live in harmony with the Will of God.

WHAT is the condition of the people of God during history ? It is like to the story found in the Book of Esther. They are scattered abroad upon the face of the earth ; they are a people separate and distinct from all other peoples ; and, as a rule, they are down-trodden, despised, and even hated. One of this unhappy race was, as if by chance, raised to be the queen of the empire, and her uncle who had brought her up from childhood sat in the king's gate. Evil was triumphant, pride, as represented by Amalek, held the reins of the state chariot, and the historic hatred betwixt Amalek and Israel was once more brought to light in the face of the world. Amalek doomed Israel to death ; the time was fixed for the execution ; but there was One working in the darkness whose face could not be seen ; and whose Name is not named in the Book. By a mysterious providence Amalek, as represented by Haman, was hanged upon the gallows, and the despised Jew became the second in the realm of Persia, the ruler of the world. That is history ; as found epitomised in Joseph in Egypt, and in Mordecai in Shushan in Persia ; grace, truth, and righteousness are triumphant in the earth over all evil powers ; and the man who is successful seeks the good of his people and brings to them salvation and peace. The story is parable, allegory, or history, let men pass behind the veil and they will find Christ, the Providence of God, unseen, nameless, yet the Power in heaven and on earth to preserve and bless men.

How have the conditions of time appeared to thoughtful, faithful, suffering, tried, bereaved sons of Esau? The answer is to be found in the Book of Job and in the man of Uz. Man ought to be happy; his life should be a continual feast; there is wealth for everybody, and thus all men ought to be content, thankful, and truly religious. Why is it that a spectre may be found at any and every good man's fireside, and a dark cloud ever threatening to destroy his happiness? It is a serious thought that possibly one near and dear to him may commit sin; may even be so far lost to righteousness as to curse God in his heart; and such actions as these are sure to bring their inevitable results; sin leads to death; and to curse God in the sacred inner sanctuary of the soul is spiritual death; it is to usurp the throne and reign where God alone should reign. This conception of sin and its consequences does not require discussion. The problem in Job is not justice and judgment upon evil-doers; but, rather, how is it that a good, true, faithful man may find that calamity upon calamity falls upon him, apparently without real cause, and against men's conceptions of the truth, goodness, providence and grace of God? What is it that constitutes manhood? Is it wealth, position, honour, family, race, clothes, skin, flesh, bones? Not any of these; it is faith in God, love of truth, obedience to duty and gracious deeds in helping those who suffer; if any man is thus spiritually endowed he is a man; if not he has not attained to manhood. But assuming it to be possible that such a good man could be found, then what will men say, if he is seen to be not apparently under the favour of God, but exposed to robbers and murderers, subject to disease and pain, misrepresented by loving friends, and, as men would say, by a cursed fortune reduced to a cursed condition? What men have said, and still say, may be found in the very wise counsels which Job's friends gave to him in the days of his trouble; they did not understand Job, nor the problems discussed, and thus it was little wonder if they could not soothe his sorrows or comfort his soul. God understood: He comforted Job; and Job knew better at the end of his trial the lesson he had to learn. Job became priest and intercessor for his friends; he was blessed by God; and he has been a blessing to many. Even so it must be; it was possible for an Edomite thousands of years ago to discover that the powers of evil will not reign for ever; that the subtle arguments of wise men about

God and providence will one day come to an end, and that the great Arbiter in all discussions will confound those wise in their own conceits, prove their reasonings to be incomplete and unsatisfactory, and lead them to perceive the thought that sorrow and suffering are not caused by the evil doings of good men who love truth, righteousness and grace ; but by evil, lawless powers, by selfish relations, by conceited theorists, and by personal ignorance of the Will and the Ways of God. Men see the visible troubles and sorrows by which they are surrounded ; they do not perceive, that but for the special intervention of God, in His Grace, remedy there would be none ; evil would be regnant ; the strife of tongues would never cease ; and the ignorance of men would never pass away. If Job speaks to the souls of men, telling them that God lives ; that He will subdue evil powers ; that he will make the foolish reasonings of men useful ; that He will justify His Own works in the realm of His Grace ; that evil, sin, sorrow, trouble are not His works, but the works of men ; and that His purpose will be fulfilled in due time, by giving abundant blessings to all who suffer for truth and righteousness ; then this Book was not written in vain, and men will obtain mercy and find comfort in the kingdom of mercy and of heaven.

WHO is it that is carrying on this work of grace among men ; and who are the subjects of this strange realm that is not visible, but spiritual ? The answer is to be found in the Book of Psalms, as the moral expression of the thoughts of men throughout the ages. This Book is not a special revelation, as embodied in Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, or Job ; it is a kind of revelation that reaches the souls of men from the reflections they can seize of the thoughts of other men as they express their thoughts in their experiences, opinions, conceptions, rash utterances, mature thoughts, intellectual struggles, moral convictions, gracious ideas, and prophetic thoughts, as to the future. As will be seen by glancing at the Psalms, they are, as a rule, intensely personal ; they may even be said to be egoistic ; the themes are man and God ; men and their deeds ; good and evil ; and the problems of sin, salvation and cleansing ; the righteous life ; the intolerable struggle against wrong ; the wickedness of the wicked ; the judgments of God ; the curse that rests upon all that is evil ; the kingdom of truth, righteousness and grace ; and, even the kingdom of Glory with all the blessings that are the portion of the blessed. As a Book dealing with moral problems ; that is

how a man feels, thinks, speaks, acts, judges, upon such questions, it may be asserted that there is no other book to be compared with it. In this sense it is one of the greatest revelations possessed by mankind; and it is one that must be admitted, as competent evidence upon the question of man's personality, responsibility, and spirituality. In the face of this Book any theories of naturalistic agnosticism are utterly futile; the men who wrote these psalms felt what they said; and what they felt was to them true and real. The supreme facts, that cannot be questioned, are God and human personality, with the responsibility of the creature to the Creator. If, for example, Psalms I. to VIII. are taken, they strike not merely the key-note of the Book, they run over an octave of the music, and reveal to men what they will find expressed in manifold forms throughout the Book. There is the conception of the blessed state of those who delight in the law of God, and the utterly worthless cursed state of those who are ungodly. The heathen may rage and imagine all kinds of vain things, but the Decree of God is immutable; His Son shall reign on the hill of Zion, and His enemies, and all their devices, will be broken in pieces. The wicked may seem to prosper, and they may go so far as to say that for the righteous there is no help, not even in God; but the saved man lies down to rest in perfect safety, for the Lord is his shield and glory, his defence against thousands of enemies. When the man looks within his own soul he finds it needful to cry for mercy, and to pray for light and guidance. The Lord will answer prayer; the man will commune with God and his own soul in the dark night, being assured that He will give light, gladness, rest, and safety. But this is not enough, the soul, and all that is within man, cries to God for the light of truth and the destruction of lies; and through truth, purity of heart, godly fear, the worship of God and guidance in the right way, there comes the overthrow of evil, and that gladness that becomes jubilant through the Divine favour. How suddenly the music is changed to the minor key and the soul, trembling with fear, cries out for mercy, complains of weakness, asks for healing, is vexed, needs saving, and deliverance, observes the shadow of the grave, is wearied with groaning, full of grief, and all these things because of enemies. It is enough, for the Lord hears the voice of weeping, supplication and prayer; and in their turn the enemies of God are ashamed and sore vexed. The seventh Psalm is Messianic in its utter-

ances ; the cry is one of trust for help and deliverance from persecutors ; the innocent is persecuted without cause, his soul torn in pieces as if rent by a lion, and no deliverer can be seen. But evil is not successful, the righteous God is angry with the wicked and will punish them ; they make a pit to destroy and they fall into the ditch they prepared for others ; but the Redeemer and the redeemed will call upon the Name of the Lord Most High. In the eighth Psalm the glory of God is manifested in all His works ; the heavens show forth His glory ; infants praise His Name ; man is crowned by Him with glory and honour, and the response of man to the goodness of God in all His works of creation and redemption is this, " O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the earth." It is this Lord that is the King of Grace and Glory ; and by all who seek Him and receive His Holy Spirit, the responses of their souls will be found in the Book of Psalms, for it is in its moral heart that all these thoughts and experiences are found, and the end is thanksgiving to God.

WHEREUNTO do all those things tend ? Surely it ought to be toward the attainment of wisdom, justice, judgment, equity, knowledge, and discretion. The days of youth will pass by, the experiences of adult life should become profitable ; and some day in the journey of life man ought to awaken to the fact that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge ; and that they are to be counted as fools who despise wisdom and instruction. It is not necessary to consider the wise counsels, the pithy proverbs, and the very valuable instruction that the father, the sage, the wise man, gives to his son ; it is what wise men expect from the wise who profit from the experiences of life ; and sons show wisdom when they are found wise enough to fear God, honour their parents, seek for what is true, and do that which is right. The Preacher's Voice is not so cheerful as that of the father and sage ; but his experiences are worthy of careful study. It may be true, in a sense, that all is vanity ; that there is no permanent profit in earthly things beneath the sun, and that what men see is only the ever-changing forms. But in the midst of all changes and vicissitudes, poverty or wealth, when young or old, in bright or dark days, under all conditions it is good to remember God. The realised profit from this life may not be great, far too little to give perfect satisfaction, still it is a great matter to be able to sum up the fruits of life in these thoughts ; that to obey God's Commandments is the duty of man ; and that after the

great change, named death, there will come a judgment which will discern betwixt good and evil. It is pleasant to sit at the feet of the wise king as he expresses his thoughts in practical wisdom for the welfare of the young ; it is also profitable to listen to the voice of the Preacher as he rehearses the experiences of his life ; study may become a weariness to the flesh, and there may be no end to the making of books ; but, upon the whole, these gifts from the sons of Esau ought to be appreciated ; they are of great value to men in the journey of life, and it is wonderful the amount of sunshine they bring into this sombre world.

WHETHER ? After the sad Preacher and his monotonous cry of vanity, as if the sun had set behind a cloud and the night was very near, it is strange to be launched into a world of mystery and mysticism, of love and marriage, in the SONG OF SOLOMON. It is quite true that the outward form of the Song may be credited to the sons of Esau, and yet it is not too much to suppose that there have been favoured children in the land of Edom who have seen poetic visions and wonderful pictures of a land and a life that transcend what is earthly. They have entered the land of love, and they have found that love is sweeter than life and stronger than death ; true love is not quenched by the waters of trouble, and floods of afflictions cannot drown love ; it lives here and despises vanities ; it gilds the deathbed as with a light from heaven ; it sits in the grave and vanquishes death ; and bursting from the tomb it may bring the message of hope, the sweet assurance that beyond the Desert lies the City of God where love reigns and where light and life are immortal. It is quite true that such visions are not seen by grave historians, acute scientists, or wise sages and theologians ; but surely it may be conceived to be possible that poets and painters have seen such visions on this earth, or beyond it ; and humanity is all the richer for what they have seen and told men and women about that land which to the worldling is far away, but to the glowing imagination of the poet is within his own soul. It would have been disappointing if the sons of Esau had been bereft of this vision ; it is quite true that Jacob deceitfully stole what held the best ; but to Esau there was given not only " the fatness of the earth," he was endowed with " the dew of heaven from above," and it was said that at the end the yoke of servitude would be broken from his neck and he would resume dominion. Love is like unto this

“dew of heaven from above,” and it is love that breaks every yoke and reigns supreme throughout the universe.

These are some of the thoughts which seem to have a claim upon men as the generations of Esau. They are as a vision in a land that is an oasis in the great Desert of life ; they are not in the highway of life ; or upon the banks of the river of life as it flows onward through the Desert. The track that leads to it is not unknown ; and when the oasis is reached it is not an unpleasant place to live in. The wells are deep and the water is good ; and it may well be said of Job that it is a Rehoboth where there is plenty of room, if the shepherds would only keep from strife ; but it is the psalms that are like Beer-Sheba, the well of the faithfulness of God and of His Oath to men. What would men do without the Psalms ? They would be robbed of the great treasury of praise and prayer ; they would fall back into childhood again and require to be educated afresh in the thoughts of God. It will not do for men to criticise too keenly with the intellect these lyrics of the heart, outbursts of desire, affection, passion, praise, gratitude, and worship, as if they were logical utterances to be measured by the intellect. They transcend reason ; for in these men meet with God and wrestle with Him for a blessing ; they receive blessing and the small cup of their hearts overflow in gratitude and praise. They see evil as personal, hateful, deceitful, destructive, deadly ; and thus it is little wonder if at times the somewhat sensitive critic is shocked at the thoughts and words that are uttered in the psalms. There is more in the Psalms than God and man ; there is that serpent the devil and his manifold works ; and thus men may take it for granted that the Psalms are true revelations of, and from, God ; the work of His Spirit ; the experiences of men ; and the manifestations of evil. The difficulty may not be in the Psalms, but in the men who read them when they fail to realise the attitude of the Psalm writers ; what they think and feel ; and thus the lack of sympathy and inability to understand the men and their Psalms. Further, is it not well to remember that these Psalms were not written 2000 A.D., but some of them nearly 3,000 years ago. They are not gospel hymns for modern life ; they form a psalter for mankind for ages ; and the wonder is not that there are a few imprecatory Psalms which do not seem to shine in the light of the Christian age ; but that they are, as a rule, so lofty in tone, true and faithful in expression, that they are the



fitting vehicles of thought for prince and peasant, rich and poor, great and lowly, in thinking about God, self, sin, mercy, forgiveness, peace, joy, gratitude, and praise. The conception that these Books in the Old Testament are the generations of Esau may or may not be true ; there may be many objections raised to such a theory ; but in the light of the generations of Genesis it seems necessary to look for these generations, and if possible to find them. It may seem a great stretch of the imagination to thus endow Esau with spiritual blessings that are so religious and praiseworthy and which men have conceived to be far above the level of Esau and his descendants. On the other hand, it has to be remembered that these Books, in the providence of God, have been thus associated together ; they do synchronise with the method of Christ ; they are not limited by the nation of Israel, and thus the limitation to Israel spiritually is not warranted ; this would be a limitation by man with which the Divine purpose of grace would not agree. It is important to point out that this series of Books have a unity as well as a purpose ; and that they terminate as if they had no immediate connection with the great purpose of God in the Christian dispensation. In other words, Esau has a history of grace, an altar of sacrifice, a city and its walls, law and order, a vision or history of salvation in mankind, a problem of good and evil, suffering and sorrow, a great revelation of the hearts of men in wisdom, experience, and the vision of love. Where is the Kingdom of God ? the onward development, the seed and the fulfilment of all the Promises of God in Christ ? They are not to be found ; the blessing is not in Esau, and thus there is no further development in these Books of the kingdom of Grace.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE PROPHETS.

Returning from this brief inquiry into the generations of Esau, spiritually conceived, as the grandchild of faith and the son of hope, it will now be necessary to take up the lines of thought in the generations of Isaac, and try to look forward to the generations of Jacob. Keeping in view the conception of development, the position reached is that of the imminent downfall of the kingdom of Israel, as representing the visible kingdom of Grace. Faith was lost, hope was dead, patience had become dumb endurance, and the love of God as Redeemer from Egypt was a thing of the past. The child of Egypt was dead and buried in the Desert. Moses and Mosaism, where were they? Joshua, the truth and moral law, they could not be found in Israel; and, as for Samuel, the seer, the man representing the Divine Grace to the nation, he was only a name, and the living power in Samuel, where was it to be found in Israel? What is the position of Israel in the days of Isaiah the prophet? What are the visions he is privileged to see, and what are his conceptions about this kingdom of God and of Grace, as he looks upon Israel, the people of God? Isaiah is a seer, a prophet of God; he is in name the salvation of Jehovah; his name, messages, and person agree, and thus his messages to men are as if Jehovah spake by him to Israel of a salvation yet to be accomplished. To Isaiah, the condition of Israel had become utterly hopeless; this kingdom of Grace, as a shadow, must pass away; and the question was what would take its place in the earth to fulfil the promises, and bring a true kingdom of God among men? If Israel is cast down, led into captivity, and loses the birthright, then who will succeed, and who will be endowed with the Divine Blessing that will bless the world? Israel is not a nation and people of God; it is not a kingdom of Grace, and of God; it is chaos and darkness; it is rebellious and ignorant; it is sinful and corrupt; and the body politic is sick, faint, diseased, incurable. It is not Israel, it is Sodom, and thus it deserves

the fate of Sodom. There was yet a little time for repentance ; there was an opportunity to learn the true ways of God ; if they would will to do good, it would be well, if not, then the sword must come ; this is from the mouth of the Lord, and it is true. This is the condition of Israel ; it is degraded so much that it is compared with Sodom, and it does not compare favourably with the ox or ass, these faithful servants of men. What can God do with such a people ; and in what way is His Kingdom of Grace and blessing to men to survive in the earth ? What is it that men are called to do with this problem ? Sit down and wrangle about one, or two Isaiahs ; or whether there was ever a man named Isaiah that wrote these prophecies ? If ever there was an Isaiah men may be assured of this : that he would have been the last man to claim right of authorship of this Book or the discovery, or invention, of what it contains. How can man define inspiration by the Holy Spirit ; or how can a theory contain what man cannot explain ? It is true that prophets are not automations ; it pleases the Holy Spirit to call them, fit and prepare them for the work they have to do ; they are human instruments, men moved by the Spirit, and thus they see, hear, and speak, as taught by the Spirit. The name on the front of the book may be "The Prophet Isaiah" ; but spiritually minded men see beyond Isaiah, and read "THE SALVATION OF JEHOVAH." Why do the prophecies take the apparently disjointed form they do ? Would it not be better if they were set in logical order so that men might follow them intelligently, and thus grasp their meaning ? What is the use of asking such questions, or of attempting to suggest in serpentlike fashion that somehow the Lord has not dealt quite openly with men ; that He has led them a very roundabout way to the promised land ; that after all men may not be so very much to blame ; for how could they be expected to understand all these things about the kingdom of Grace, seeing that they were in a sensuous world, where they could see what was beautiful, enjoy what was pleasant, and seek after knowledge of good and evil, with no visible hand stretched forth to prevent the willing inquirer from taking the wrong pathway, and eating the poisoned fruit ? What can men do when they get thus befogged with questions they cannot answer ? The foolish man goes forward, knowing not that the end of the way he has chosen is destruction ; the thoughtful man stands still, prays for guidance, waits for the light, and looks for the salvation of Jehovah.

May not this have been something like the attitude of the prophets during the age of the downfall of Israel, the Captivity, and the Restoration ? What they saw in the past seemed clear enough ; it was the purpose of the Mercy and Grace of God to save and redeem men ; it was a man, a hope, promises, a nation, a kingdom ; and all these things pointed straight forward to Israel, as God's nation ; and through Israel, as a great empire, to salvation and blessing for all the races of men. This is the constant trend of the thoughts of men during all past ages ; it has been rampant as a Christian ideal ; it is still living upon the earth ; and men know not that 3,000 years ago their ideal was set up in Israel under Samuel, David, and Solomon, and was then proved to be a vision of the night and not a spiritual reality. If the wise men of the twentieth century A.D. are perplexed about similar problems, and cannot find the way of solution, is it so very strange that the prophets felt as if they were groping in the dark ; that in the chaos, darkness, and ruin surrounding them, they could not clearly see in what way the kingdom of God would be made manifest in Israel ? It seems necessary to emphasise this thought ; even to Isaiah the thought that the kingdom could come outside Israel was not conceivable ; and the apostles of Christ were so pre-occupied with this conception that after His resurrection their eyes were fixed upon the restoration of the kingdom in Israel. It is strange, but true, that this ideal of a visible kingdom of God, somewhat like the kingdoms in other nations, is the conception of prophets, apostles, the fathers, and modern churchmen ; their ideal was destroyed in the kingdom of Israel ; and wherever it has reappeared among men it has been shattered to fragments. The conception was an ideal ; men did not know it when it was in their midst ; they could not rise to its requirements ; they were like Israel in the Desert with the manna ; they despised the food of angels, preferring the apples of Sodom, the corn of Egypt, and the fruits of Babylonia.

It is amidst the ruins of this kingdom that Isaiah is found ; the chaos and darkness are around him ; the sickness is unto visible death ; and what the end will be is not doubtful for this Israel and Judah ; it is the future that cannot be seen ; and it is for that future the spiritual vision of the seer is required. What the prophet saw in visions is the theme of the Book ; whether he fully understood what he saw is a different matter ; it is enough for students of the Word of God to try to walk in his footsteps, and, if

possible, to catch a reflection of that light of truth that came to men through Isaiah. It is difficult to conceive the position of Isaiah clearly ; he is in the midst of a kingdom tottering to its fall ; the light of the past is still there, but it is becoming obscured, eclipsed ; yet God lives ; He is faithful and true ; the light will return, and the day will come. What will that light reveal ? and what will be the history of that day of God ? This is not the problem for Isaiah only ; it is the question for all God's prophets in all the ages ; and specially at every crisis where past and future meet in chaos and darkness. It is acknowledged as a great truth that the studies of wise men, as philosophers, have been the pursuit of truth, specially as dealing with the order of the universe, the constitution of what exists ; and it may be true that the studies of the prophets of God have been His Purpose of Grace for the salvation of mankind. If this is so, then the philosopher is a student of creation in its order ; whilst the prophets have kept in view, as their special study, the great work of re-creation by Grace in Christ. It is evident that a detailed study of this work of God, as it is now presented to men, transcends all former conceptions. This is the work of many men for many days ; it is as with the telescope and astronomy ; what has been seen by the natural vision is the many well known stars in their positions, relations, and individual glory ; now the heavens are thrown open ; the interminable space is seen to be filled with innumerable stars ; and the stronger the power of the telescope, the greater the immensity of stars in space never seen before by the eyes of men. All that can be attempted here is to try to sketch in outline this kingdom of God as the foundation stones are being laid in the prophets ; and the form it will take in history. To alter the figure of thought the visible Tree of Life has grown up among men, and it has flowered with blossom in the kingdom of Israel. What is the fruit of that tree ? Where is the Seed to be found that will produce the spiritual Tree of Life ?

The conception as to failure in the past, through the inability of men to rise to the revelations given to them by God, is of great importance. It reveals how God has ever preceded men in every new movement for development ; that the results have always been, through sin, made ineffectual for salvation ; that after every fresh revelation there was another fall, and that each fall became more serious and critical, because men were always approaching nearer to the stage of manhood. As already pointed out, in the

midst of these ever recurring cycles of thought and movement it is not easy to point out the special stage of development, or the development reached within each cycle. In the widest sense this is one of the stages in the development of the kingdom of Grace ; in another it is the end of the kingdom of Israel, as a visible kingdom. The period of Seth-Enoch ended in the Flood ; the period of Noah ended in Chaldea ; the period of Abraham ended in Egypt ; the period of Moses in the Desert, and in the land of Moab ; the period of Joshua in the anarchy of the nation ; and the period of Samuel, and the kingdom of Israel in the Captivity. This new movement is of much importance, because here the question is raised whether this new spiritual development is to be like those in the past, or if men will rise to a knowledge of truth, to righteousness, to grace, and thus catch up and reflect the true, moral and gracious attributes of God ? It is somewhat difficult to grasp the thought that, so far as man is concerned, he is a failure ; try him by any standard God has set up, and down he falls ; try him by institutions and the same result is obtained ; as by a nation, and he is corrupt ; as by a kingdom, and instantly he gravitates to Edom. Israel wished to be like other nations ; not to be a people of God, true priests, wise judges or faithful kings. These are the facts ; and yet this is the way of development into Godlikeness. Let men study these things carefully, and then try to conceive how much wiser they are found to be in the thoughts and ways of God at the beginning of the twentieth century, A.D. They are still attempting to solve the same problems, in the same way, apparently not knowing the fact that all these plans have failed ; that in their very nature they are bound to fail ; that, in fact, the salvation of man, and of mankind, is not attainable by such means.

What then can the prophets teach men about this kingdom of God ; and in what way, through the Spirit of grace and truth, do they perceive that this kingdom will come ? Isaiah travels but a very little way when these words reach his soul, " It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills ; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob ; and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths ; for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and

shall rebuke many people : and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks ; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord." . . . "The Lord Himself shall give you a sign ; behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Emmanuel." . . . "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given ; and the government shall be upon His shoulder ; and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government there shall be no end upon the throne of David and upon His Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." There is one that shall come as a rod out of Jesse and a branch from his roots endowed with all spiritual wisdom. This is a song to be sung by God's people. God is to them as a strong city, salvation is like walls and bulwarks, and the gates are open that those who are righteous and keep the truth may enter in. There is a word of comfort to those who suffer ; the day of trouble is past ; the way is being prepared for the King ; His glory shall be revealed to men and they shall see it. "Say unto the cities of Judah, behold, your God." The visions change their form ; the Servant is seen, the Elect One, endowed with the Spirit He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He will not only raise up Jacob, He will restore Israel ; be a light to Gentile nations and salvation to the ends of the earth. There is one who will bring good tidings to men and publish salvation and peace. The Man of Sorrows, despised, lightly esteemed by men ; He will be the one who will suffer as a lamb slain ; His soul will be made an offering for sin, yet the travail He endures will be the means of blessing to men, and of satisfaction to Himself. Out of the gross darkness the light will come and God's glory will rise upon men ; the Gentiles will come to that light of truth, and the kings of men to His brightness. The Spirit of God rests upon Him to preach, teach, heal, and give liberty to men ; and those who follow Him will be as the ministers and priests of God. A new heaven and earth can be seen afar off ; this is the land promised to Abraham, and within it the seed of the faithful will remain.

The prophet Jeremiah is sanctified and ordained to be a prophet unto the nations ; he is endowed with power by God to speak

His Word to men ; and as a special means of instruction the prophet perceives in visions, a rod of an almond tree ; and, a seething pot with its face toward the north ; thus signifying that the time for judgment upon Israel was very near ; and that out of the north an evil power would come upon the land. This prophet is later in history than Isaiah ; the messages he has to deliver to the people are more grievous in their nature ; the doom is about to fall upon Israel and the days of the Captivity are very near. The darkness has been intensified, the day of destruction for Jerusalem is at hand, and thus the prophetic utterances are full of judgments upon evil-doers. Still throughout the Book there are glimpses of hope ; the storm will pass by and a day of salvation will return to Israel. It cannot be said that this is a pleasant Book to read ; but it ought to be profitable, and full of instruction, to those who care to study the history of a nation enjoying great privileges ; and what came upon the people because of sin in its manifold forms. This Book is not outside the purposes of God in His realm of grace ; rather it may be considered as a vision of the consequences of evil-doing ; a record of the consequences of sinning against the grace and mercy of God ; and a warning to all men and nations, so that they may not walk in the downward path trodden by Israel. Men may be inclined to say that the days for such judgments are long past ; let men beware and remember that the judgments of God do not become lighter as the knowledge and the responsibilities of men increase. If the idolatry of Israel was a terrible sin to be severely punished even by disinheritance, what would the punishment be to Christian nations if at the end of their age of grace there came upon them also the sword of justice and judgment ? The conception as to Israel is that it is idolatrous, corrupt, unjust, and unrighteous ; the coming King who shall one day reign and prosper over a people redeemed from many countries is a righteous Branch raised up to sit on the throne of David ; in His days Judah will be saved and Israel dwell in safety, and His Name will be **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**. The shadow of the Captivity is over Israel ; but a day of restoration will come and the land will be re-possessed ; palace and city will be built ; merry voices will be heard once more in the land ; they will have their own nobles and governors to rule over them, and they shall be the people of God. In these days there will be a new covenant, not like that made at Sinai, and broken as soon as made ; but one



engraven in heart and soul which all will possess, so that knowing the Lord in spirit and in truth, they will have the assurance of forgiveness, and they will remember their sins no more. These truths are not to be lightly esteemed, for they are given by God with the most solemn assurances of His faithfulness to His people.

The prophet Ezekiel is found among the captive Jews by the river Chebar in the land of the Chaldeans. The word of the Lord came expressly to him ; the Lord's hand was upon him ; he saw the heavens opened and visions of God. To this prophet there was given the vision of the Spirit in His movements above the earth ; and in the midst upon the likeness of the throne of Glory there was seen One like a Man with the likeness of the glory of the Lord. The word that came to him was like a roll written inside and out, and the burden of the roll was that of sorrow, mourning and woe. The day of punishment for Israel was not past ; and thus in various ways the prophet, in the midst of the exiles conveyed to them the messages he received from God. In this prophecy also men will find the demoralisation and degradation of Israel ; and as for the worship of priests and people, it can only be said that they had forsaken God their Redeemer and had become the worshippers of the gods of the heathen world. The ancients of Israel, not wise men, had become heathen in thought and deed ; and thus in the darkness of their own souls they said, " The Lord seeth us not ; the Lord hath forsaken the earth." The judgments upon Israel and upon the nations were severe ; for men were taught that the Lord is judge over all the nations of the ancient world. For the nations of the East there is no word of encouragement, they have sinned, and being unrepentant the consequences of God's judgments will fall upon them ; but to Israel there is the promise of return and restoration to the favour of God. This restoration of Israel is expressed in a new form ; the people of God are as sheep that require a shepherd ; God's servant David will be that shepherd, to feed His flock, to bring them into a safe and peaceful place, where they will receive abundant blessing. The land is like Eden ; the heathen are not to be found, the beasts of prey are destroyed ; and in the midst there is to be seen a Plant of Renown under which they will dwell in safety. This people of God will be cleansed from sin ; they will be renewed in heart and spirit, and being thus changed they will walk in newness of spirit in the ways of God. Israel is compared to a valley full of dead dry bones ; by the Spirit of God

they will live again and be restored to the favour of God. There is a vision of a great re-union ; David is both shepherd and King in Israel, their prince for ever under the everlasting covenant of peace. The end of the visions of Ezekiel is that of restored Israel ; the new order of worship and service ; the flowing forth of the sacred waters ; the land repossessed, the city restored, and the name of that city is "THE LORD IS THERE."

THE BOOK OF DANIEL changes the stand-point of vision ; the scene is Babylon in the days of the captivity of Israel ; and the problems considered are different from those of Jeremiah or Ezekiel. It is the court of the great king Nebuchadnezzar ; and four captive youths, in the providence of God, are being trained for the king's service under the wise teachers of Babylon. God visited the king by a dream in the night, and the king forgetting the dream, was sorely troubled as to what the dream was, and what it meant. The wise men of Babylon could not reveal the dream nor explain the meaning ; but through the mercy of God, and in answer to prayer, the dream was made known to Daniel in the night. The important part of the dream, and the interpretation, is that of the Stone that was the means of destroying the image and the kingdoms it represented. The God of heaven will set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand for ever. The God that could reveal such a dream in such a way is the God of gods, and the Lord over kings ; this is the confession of the king and it is true. In the days of Belshazzar the king, Daniel had a dream, and in the vision he beheld the Son of Man coming with the clouds, and He received dominion, glory, and a kingdom over all nations, and this Kingdom will never be destroyed. In the interpretation of the angel this kingdom and dominion is given to the saints of God, only the Kingdom and dominion is not theirs ; it is that of the King, and all nations shall serve Him. After special prayer, confession of sin and supplication to God for Israel, there was given to Daniel that revelation of the future which seems to point to a consummation of judgment upon sin ; a reconciliation that would abide ; a righteousness that would be everlasting ; a closing of prophetic vision ; and the anointing of the most Holy. These events were to date from that of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, seven prophetic weeks to Messiah, the Prince, and sixty-two weeks,

and after that period of sixty-two weeks then Messiah would be cut off on account of others, the end being an invasion, the destruction of city and sanctuary, a flood of troubles, wars and desolations. The covenant—that of grace, mercy and peace—will be confirmed with many during one week ; but in the midst of that week, sacrifice, oblation and altar will vanish from sight ; and the vision, until the consummation, is that of desolation to Israel. There is a long vision of history ; times of great unrest and trouble ; but at the end of this period, Israel, the people of God, shall be delivered, all whose names are written in the book of life ; there will be a resurrection from death, to life and glory, or to a death of shame and contempt ; then the wise teachers shall be like suns in the heavens ; and those who influence others toward righteousness will be like the stars in their brightness for ever. How long shall it be to the end of these wonders ? Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to this consummation of events at the end of that period. That end will come ; let men rest in God during these events ; and the issue will prove the truth of the divine wisdom.

THE BOOK OF HOSEA continues the Divine revelation of mercy and judgment ; but now the thoughts are thrown back upon the kingdoms of Judah and Israel ; and there is in the prophet and his family life, an illustration, a revelation, a representation, of the altogether unseemly, unreasonable life of Judah and Israel, as nations in their relations towards God. The immoralities, or idolatries, are such that they are only to be seen to be condemned ; and yet God in His mercy forgives, becomes reconciled, and enters into a new betrothal in truth, righteousness, and faithfulness with those who are utterly unworthy of His mercy and love. There will be a time of forsaking, when there will not be king or prince, priest or sacrifice ; but afterward restoration, seeking after the Lord and David the king, with a realisation of the goodness of God, and that gracious fear which turns men from evil. This restoration is comparable to a resurrection after death, and as a life in His sight ; it is to follow the Lord in His ways ; and to find that this life is as the coming of the Spirit with abundant blessing. There are signs from nature, the winter, death, the glad spring and sunshine, and then the rain from heaven as blessing upon the earth. What is the summation of this sad story of Israel ? These are the words in the mouth of Hosea : “ Oh Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself ; but in Me is thine help. I will be thy

king ; where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities ? and thy judges of whom thou saidest, Give me a king and princes ? I gave thee a king in Mine anger, and took him away in My wrath. Oh Israel, return unto the Lord thy God ; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. . . I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely ; for Mine anger is turned away from him. . . Who is wise, and he shall understand these things ? prudent, and he shall know them ? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them ; but the transgressors shall fall therein."

THE PROPHECY OF JOEL contemplates the judgments of God as having fallen upon Israel ; but the worst has not come ; there is to be discerned a day close at hand, of darkness and clouds ; the invasion of the land, and what is like Eden before the invaders is left behind them as a wilderness. There will be restoration and blessing upon Israel ; the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh, and " whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." There is the vision of a period of war and trouble ; the harvest time comes upon the evil doers ; it is a day of darkness, of the shaking of heaven and earth ; but the Lord is the hope and strength of His people ; He will cleanse from blood, the city shall be holy, for the Lord shall dwell in Zion.

IN THE PROPHECY OF AMOS, the herdman of Tekoa, there is the same burden of judgments upon the nations ; and specially upon Israel. At the very end there is the revelation of a day when the tabernacle of David will be raised up, and the city rebuilt as in past times. Edom and the heathen will be subject to Israel ; the captivity will end and the restoration will be permanent.

THE PROPHECY OF OBADIAH speaks of the downfall of Edom, and the day of the Lord upon the heathen ; as they had done, so are they to be rewarded ; their evil doings will return upon their own heads. But to Zion will come deliverance and holiness ; the land will be re-possessioned, Esau will be judged, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's.

THE PROPHECY OF JONAH strikes a new note in the onward development of revelation ; it is not limited to Israel, for it is a message from God by a prophet of Israel to Nineveh, and the great world of mankind. Is the purpose of God's kingdom of Grace for Israel only ? No ; it is that through Israel, and the Word of God, the message of Divine mercy and Love may reach mankind. The special teaching in the story seems to be that Israel is found unwilling to fulfil the purposes of God ; and to become the messenger

of mercy to the world ; but the means taken to prevent God's work of grace are useless, His will must be carried out, and the message of repentance, grace, mercy, and forgiveness carried to mankind.

THE PROPHECY OF MICAH calls upon all men, and even the Earth to listen to this truth ; that the Lord is the Witness against men for their evil deeds ; and that He will come down for punishment, and tread upon what men esteem as high ; and in His presence what seems to be solid as the mountains will melt like wax, or be poured out as water. Men may think that they will be able to build Zion with blood ; but they are mistaken, the result will be that Zion will be like a ploughed field, and Jerusalem heaps of ruins. In the last days there will be restoration ; the House of the Lord will be raised up ; and to it the nations will come, so that they may be taught the truth of God ; in that day men will love peace and abhor war ; they will possess homes and sit under their own vine and fig tree without fear. The Ruler of Israel will come to men by the way of Bethlehem ; He may be despised by men at His coming, because of His lowly state ; but those who will thus judge will greatly err, for His goings forth have been of old, from everlasting. " He shall stand and feed (His flock) in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God ; and they shall abide : for now shall He be great unto the ends of the earth."

THE VISION OF NAHUM is the revelation of the burden of Nineveh and the judgments that would come upon Assyria. There is very little in this prophetic utterance bearing upon the Kingdom of God in the future ; it is summed up in one brief cry for Israel, or the people of God, to take their eyes off the great world power in Nineveh, ever at war, to turn, and " Behold upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ! " and this word of encouragement : " O, Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows ; for the wicked shall no more pass through thee ; he is utterly cut off."

THE VISION OF HABAKKUK, and its great burden, is that of the Chaldean Invasion. What is the remedy for such disasters falling upon a land as punishment for sin ? The outlook is as dark as night, and no way of escape is to be seen. What then, must faith fail and all hope be given up because there is no streak of light around the horizon ? At such a time there is only one safe course to take ; it is to watch what God will do, wait for His

Word, and see what reply He will give at such a time. There is a vision ; it is for an appointed time ; it will speak ; it is worth tarrying for, and it will come in due time. The proud man in his pride will go on and get his reward ; but the just man will live by faith and wait and see the salvation of Israel. "The Lord is in His holy temple ; let all the earth keep silence before Him." The time may be that of famine in the land ; yet by faith men may rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation.

THE PROPHECY OF ZEPHANIAH is a judgment upon Judah because of idolatry ; and condemnation of the surrounding nations because of their evil deeds. The remnant of Israel redeemed by God will be safe ; they will sing and rejoice with all their hearts ; the enemy will be cast out ; the King will be in the midst ; and the evil day will be past. The Lord will be mighty in the midst of Israel ; He will save, rejoice with joy, rest in love, and will sing with joy over His people. When the captivity is past then Israel will be a name and a praise to God throughout the earth.

THE PROPHECY OF HAGGAI is that of a restoration accomplished ; but the people have not commenced to build the House of God. They are encouraged to undertake this work, so that in thus honouring God, His blessing may rest upon Israel. There is a prophecy bearing upon the future ; it is like that of an earthquake, in which the heavens and earth will be shaken and the heathen kingdoms will be overthrown. Zerubbabel, prince and governor, is as a sign in these matters ; he is God's chosen servant, the ruler of Israel.

IN THE PROPHECIES OF ZECHARIAH Israel is warned against evil doing ; and of following in the footsteps of their fathers. God will come and dwell in the midst of Zion ; other nations will be joined to Israel ; the Lord will deign to inherit Judah as His portion ; for this grace revealed by God let men wonder and be silent. The Branch, the Servant of God, will come, the House of God will be built but not by the might or power of man, but by the Holy Spirit. There may be a mountain in the way, but before the Prince it will become a plain and the headstone of the House of God will be brought forth "with shoutings, Grace, grace unto it." It is the BRANCH that will build God's Temple, bear its glory and sit on the throne as a Priest. As a King He will come, just, with salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass. "If ye think good, give me my price ; and if not, forbear. So they

weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. . . . I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced. . . . The Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His Name one."

THE PROPHECY OF MALACHI contains the promise that from the sun rising to sun setting the Lord's name will be great among the Gentiles, and that a pure offering will be given to God in worship. The promise of the Messenger is given to prepare the way of the King; and His sudden appearance in the temple is to be expected. Who may abide the day of His coming for mercy or for judgment? In the latter days, amidst the trials of life, those who fear the Lord will talk together about the Kingdom of Grace and the works of God; and as they were found faithful their names are to be written in a book as those who fear God and think upon His Name. They will be His special treasure, and specially cared for by Him. The day that is coming has two appearances; to the evil, fire and destruction; to the God-fearing, sunrise, light, healing, and blessing.

These are a few of the visions of the prophets of God as they perceive the past, the present, the near, and the distant future of the Kingdom of Grace in the world. It is plain that the background, and the surroundings of the prophets are all similar; the end of the age is near, or come, and the judgments of God are to be poured out upon men. It is literally a day of judgment; all the nations stand before the judgment seat of God, and all are condemned. Upon the nations the sentence is that of condemnation. Upon Israel and Judah the sentence is also that of just judgment; but there is that in Israel that cannot be cast away; there is a precious Seed of Life that must be preserved, so that God's promises may be fulfilled for the salvation of mankind. It is a vain dream to suppose that any of these nations could be conceived as having been true and faithful to God; they had all lapsed into idolatry; they were corrupt, cruel, despotic, tyrannous; and so far as they were concerned they were on the highway to destroy each other. They had become disintegrated, mutually repellent, intolerant and intolerable; the hammer of Babylon was the means to be used to reduce the whole mass to chaos; and, when that hammer was crushed,

then there would begin a new era for Israel and the Gentile nations.

It is this new age, dating from the proclamation of Cyrus of Persia, that requires consideration ; and this portion as found in the Prophets may be briefly summed up by the usual questions, following the method of Christ. It will be well to notice that the sixteen prophets may be divided into two series of eight each ; and that these are to be interpreted as one series in which there is the revelation of the light of truth as to the future ; and a second series in which life permeates the body, and thus, what may be called a living spiritual organic kingdom of grace is revealed to men. It is quite true that the visions of Isaiah are long before the proclamation of Cyrus ; but this is the usual order in the realm of grace ; the germination of the seed begins long before men can see any movement ; and this thought also should be remembered, that the first cycle in every new movement is linked with the past, and in a wonderful manner the future is foreseen. Thus when the question Whence ? is put to the Book of Isaiah, it is to that Israel that is linked with the history of mankind in the hour of great darkness ; but, the first vision of the prophet is the universality of the kingdom including all nations with this special characteristic it is a kingdom of peace. There is one sign for all men : it is summed up in the Name Immanuel. God is with men whether they know it or not : He is their Tower for defence ; their Comfort in sorrow ; their Glory. But what was beyond the thoughts of men. He is also their Servant : their troubles are His travail ; it is His suffering that is salvation ; and by Him the new heavens and earth will be restored to men. The vision is very wide ; it embodies the kingdom in all its cycles of development from Eden to the New Jerusalem.

WHEN have these events been made manifest ? Just as in the first vision the man Isaiah disappears, and Immanuel, the Salvation of Jehovah, appears as the true Revealer of all events, so here it is well to look beyond Jeremiah, and to look upon Immanuel as the Man of Sorrows, acquainted with the griefs of all His people ; as personally called and sanctified for His work ; as the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS ; as the means of restoration ; as the Author of the new Covenant by which the law of God will no longer be written upon tables of stone, but within heart, soul and mind of his people. He is as Immanuel, Righteousness ; and, as God, faithful to all



covenants; they are all in Himself; He conforms to, and fulfils, them; and all the sorrowful follow Him; they, too, are all as Jeremiah in the day of trouble; they are with, and in, Him, during the long age of trouble and sorrow lying before Israel.

WHY did God give to men such visions and experiences by the prophet Ezekiel? They are visions of the Spirit; they are meant to give strength and comfort; they tell men to look up and not down, to consider that vision at the river Chebar with all its symbols, and specially that One Man upon the throne of glory with the rainbow of mercy for His diadem. It is as the Son of Man that He is the special Sign to men. He lives among exiles, an exile from Home; and yet He is able to speak to them about restoration. He is the Shepherd of Israel, the Plant of Renown; and the Life as brought back to life by the power of God. The breath of the Spirit is in this book; the Spirit is as a river full of blessing, and like unto a City of God of which it can be said: the Lord dwells therein.

WHAT is this Kingdom of Grace revealed to Daniel? It is the contrast that is the most striking fact in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. The king had a dream and forgot what he dreamt; like kings, and men of all ages, he had no true conception of the spiritual world that surrounded him. Through Daniel this truth was brought home to him in the lesson, that the work of kings, though apparently important to them, and to their countries, they are really only like images or dreams of the night: things, idols, which they set up for their own glory; but the end will be the downfall of all such powers; their fall will come by the invisible hand of God intervening, breaking them to pieces and scattering them throughout the earth like chaff before the wind. This kingdom as of a living stone, becomes the Kingdom of One like a man; and of the saints of God; and it is Messiah, the King, that is to be the sacrifice for sin, make atonement, and bring in that kingdom which will be governed by true and righteous laws. The visions clearly indicate that the times of the supremacy of man's kingdom are well known to the Revealer; but the time of the end of all the visions, and of the supremacy of Messiah's Kingdom in visible order is far away, and patience is required to wait for the fulfilment of the purposes of God. There is no hap-hazard in such matters, the Man upon the Throne reigns over all, and may even be said to make evil kings His servants; it is His Spirit that controls all events, limiting the evil of evil-doers,

and watching over those who suffer ; and the end will be the overthrow, the exposure of the folly of evil, and the blessings of God will be inherited by the faithful.

How may the Kingdom of Grace be conceived as revealed in Hosea ? Not as a visible organised realm subject to moral law, but as a family in which love and grace ought to be supreme. There is no king, prince, priest, or altar ; idolatry and immorality prevail ; the demoralised destroy themselves ; the king desired by men was set up and cast down ; the nation is not a kingdom ; the kingdom is not a family : this is the shameful story of unfaithfulness, infidelity, utter worthlessness in the most sacred relations of life. The wise will understand this, and take care not to misinterpret or strain too far the story by which the revelation is made ; it may be that the tearing of this veil would do more than uncover the nakedness of Samaria and Jerusalem ; it may suggest that Christianity has failed in faithfulness, although even more tenderly loved and cared for ; and in fact, the Voice to all by Hosea is " I am thy Salvation."

WHO is it that speaks to men through Joel ? He is the Mighty One able to save to the uttermost, and all who call on His Name will be delivered. It is through Him that the Spirit is poured out upon men so that they may be renewed by Divine strength. In the days of great darkness He alone can see all that is taking place, and overrule all events for good. He is able to cleanse men from the sin of blood-guiltiness ; and he is the Lord that dwells in Zion.

WHEREUNTO do these thoughts tend in Amos ? In this direction : someone must be found, and be responsible for the unfaithful, the wicked. If the Divine Strength is to be used to save, defend and cleanse those who sin, then He will become like Amos, and bear the burden. It is by Him that the Tabernacle of David will be raised up, the ruins rebuilt, and Edom and the heathen possessed. It is a restoration to manifold blessings to Israel which will be permanent ; being thus planted they will not be removed again from the land that the Lord has given them.

WHITHER do all these revelations tend in Obadiah ? To the fall of Edomism, all that is represented by the elder brother, the fallen nature of man. In Edom there is no Saviour ; the Saviour comes from Mount Zion to judge Edom, and the end will be that the kingdom shall be the Lord's.

In the second series, it has been suggested that the thought of Life is the ruling one, and thus the question arises, WHENCE the

Life that is for blessing to the world ? In the story of Jonah, the Life is not in the prophet, he is only the messenger of life and mercy to Nineveh from Israel to those under the doom of death. Thus the life and grace is to be traced back to God, the gracious, merciful and kind, who willeth not that men die but they turn at His call, obey His Voice and live. It is a strange picture that of the jealous, petulant prophet, who knows so well the grace and mercy of God for his own nation, beseeching God to take away his own life since God had been merciful to Nineveh. Poor Jonah, his gourd of a night, and his foolish anger, what are they when compared with the Tree of Life, the mighty purpose of God, throughout the ages as nourished and preserved by God. It is a strange thought that with heathen, Jew and Christian, this evil spirit seems to predominate ; by the grace of God they live, yet when their fellow-men require the life they think they possess their delight is not in becoming the means of life to others, but to prevent the gracious life flowing to them. The picture is a very grim and ungracious one of the prophet sitting under his gourd waiting to see if the judgments of God would fall on Nineveh. It is a strange effect of mercy and grace to make men unmerciful and graceless ; the picture is that of grace perverted, and of blessing being changed into cursing.

WHEN did the life appear among men as seen by Micah ? He came by the way of Bethlehem, despised by men, yet the Ruler of Israel. He came not to condemn, but to pardon iniquity and to pass by transgression, because He delights in mercy.

WHY did He come in this way and what is the message of Nahum ? The vision is Nineveh and its burden ; the dwellers upon the earth and their sorrows. "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble ; and He knoweth them that trust in Him." Blessed are the meek of heart ; they shall receive the inheritance of the saints, even the life eternal. The mountains of earth have re-echoed the glad tidings of great joy, and men wait for that kingdom of peace yet to be revealed.

WHAT has Habakkuk to tell men about this life ? Simply this : that no matter what the appearance of the world may be ; the supreme duty of man is to live, watch, wait, embrace, cling to, have faith in, the Lord of Life ; not indeed as if He were in heaven, and the fearing faithful soul on earth ; but knowing that this Lord is in His temple of the soul, or nation, and that His presence will turn drought and famine into plenty, joy and salvation.

How will this life be made manifest by the prophet Zephaniah ? In this way : the life that is hidden in the heart will spring into vital action ; the powers of evil will be overthrown ; the time of singing and gladness will come ; the Lord will be present mighty to save ; He will rejoice with joy and rest in His work of love ; and those who are saved will be a name and praise to Him throughout the whole earth.

WHO is it that Haggai reveals in his prophecy ? It is the prince Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel—Asked from God ; the One born in this world upon Whom devolves the work of restoring the House of God upon the earth. He, the Christ, will overthrow all kingdoms devoid of moral life. Is He not the true Son of Samuel ? The asked of God—the sign to Israel, the chosen One ?

WHEREUNTO do these thoughts tend in Zechariah ? To the conception that the Lord is in the midst of His people ; and that the nations will find their rest in Him. He is the living Branch, possessing the perfect wisdom of God. By Him there is the Light of Life ; He builds the House of God from the foundation to the finished work ; and it is by His Spirit that men are enlightened through the living Word. He is King of Grace and of Glory ; yet men despised Him ; they gave thirty pieces of silver as the price at which they valued Him. The sum is contemptible, and the folly of men inconceivable. Heaven's noblest and best ; the very Life and Love of God, was betrayed into the hands of unfaithful, godless shepherds ; they valued Him at the price of a poor slave ; and with the voice of righteous anger and contempt, the Lord said, " Cast it unto the potter : a goodly price that I was prised at of them." The result was a fountain of blessing, mourning, cleansing, grace and prayer ; and the end will be that He shall be King over the whole earth ; the One and only King of Grace, and His Name shall be One to all men. With this vision there is that of the sanctification of the land, and holiness in life, and the Canaanite, the age—long enemy of God and Israel, will not be found in the House of God.

WHETHER will the prophet Malachi lead men ? He is God's messenger to men telling them to be prepared ; that the offerings of Israel are not acceptable ; that there is the risk of another rejection ; that the day of mercy and of life for the Gentiles and the heathen is drawing near ; and that from them sweet offerings and worship will be received. The messenger to proclaim the King will soon come ; the Lord will appear in His Temple ; to

the wicked this will mean judgment and death, but to those that fear His Name, the day, the rising sun, joy and gladness.

Such conceptions as these of the prophets, their visions, words, and actions, tend to confirm the thought that by these men the Holy Spirit was operative upon humanity for the purpose of laying the foundations of that spiritual kingdom to be in due time fully revealed in Christ and His servants and made manifest throughout the earth. It is not difficult to perceive that the condition of the nations morally and spiritually at that period was that of darkness and chaos ; there was no visible hope for mankind anywhere ; even Israel had become heathen in its practices ; it was numbered as one of the many nations ; and as a kingdom it was involved in the same doom. As conceived by the apostle Paul there was an Israel within Judah ; a spiritual within the natural ; a power of grace that transcended law ; a younger brother that sought to inherit the blessing ; and it is this power that lies at the root of this new movement from Isaiah onward. The gloom and doom that surrounds the nations is fully disclosed in the prophets ; this is the dark background of the position ; it is darkness that reigns ; all is chaos ; there is no moral or spiritual organisation, and law and order are not to be found among men. It is here, under these conditions, that the Holy Spirit begins the great work of laying the foundations of the Kingdom of Grace in spiritual order ; and it is out of this chaos that the mightiest work of God, the spiritual regeneration of mankind, is to take place. It is hardly necessary to revert in thought to the vision of the first day of creation in Genesis ; the thoughts are similar, only in Genesis the chaos is indefinite ; in the prophets it is defined, for it is mankind in this helpless, hopeless state. There is a similar thought as to development ; in Genesis a few expressive words, as lines of light in the darkness ; in the prophets a line here and a line there ; a little thought here and a great thought there ; the kingdom of darkness is penetrated and permeated by living forces that flash forth into light, and around the lines of light there are traces of life that shape themselves into the form of the Man Christ, the Seed promised for salvation ; the Destroyer of darkness, disease and death. In this sense it is assumed that the prophets have been instrumental in giving spiritual form to a spiritual kingdom ; they have sketched out great outlines of thought to prepare the way for Christ's coming ; they have predicted the form to be seen by faith by spiritual

men, and the future must see the indwelling of Christ within this tabernacle, or this kingdom, in all the fulness that is involved within this body of Christ. Upon this point there ought not to be any misconception ; what is going to be developed is the spiritual not the natural ; and it is out of the natural, that which has ended with the kingdom of Israel, that the development will arise. It is quite true that the lines of development must still be two-fold ; in the natural realm, man will continue to operate to prove his folly and bring forth the fruits of the tree of evil ; in the spiritual, the Holy Spirit of Christ will work in the realm of the spiritual, and the result will be the foundation and finished work of the House of God to the praise and glory of Christ the King of Grace.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT—MATTHEW TO II. CORINTHIANS.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW.—It may be conceived that the period of the prophets is as a prophetic age, a cycle in itself ; a kind of visible Genesis of the spiritual realm ; the analogy in Genesis is the ten generations ; as they give visible form to all that is in Genesis as a seed and to Israel as a kingdom, so the prophets in the two series give spiritual form to that kingdom of Grace which will be made manifest in Christ and the Gospels ; and in intellectual, moral, and spiritual power in the Acts, the Epistles, Revelation, and amongst the Gentiles and heathen. To put this matter in another form ; the prophetic age is the natural womb within which the spiritual takes form ; there is conception, involution, and development into the human form ; and this is the period of child-bearing, the travail and birth of Jesus, the Christ, and of His Kingdom of grace. As in Genesis the first series of six generations ends in Abraham, and the succeeding series end in Isaac and Jacob, beginning again with Abraham and then running on to Joseph and Egypt, so in the Gospel of Matthew the link in “ the book of the generation of Jesus Christ ” is backward through David to Abraham. There is a link omitted in the chain, of course omitted intentionally, that Abraham is in a special sense a son of God and found in His likeness. The natural begins with the heavens and the earth and the issue is Abraham, the spiritual ; in manifold forms the generations are repeated, but the starting point for all spiritual development is Abraham. It is here that the past of the spiritual, or the spiritual within the natural, is summed up in the generations from Abraham to Jesus, who is called Christ. There are from Abraham to David fourteen ; David to the captivity fourteen ; and from the captivity to Jesus fourteen generations. In other words these are six series of seven, and the SEVENTH is the Christ. There are

several ways in which the same order can be traced thus in the world's history, Adam, or Seth, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel or David and the kingdom, and Jesus Christ. In the line of Abraham there follows Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Jesus the Christ; and it will not be forgotten that the seventh from Adam is Enoch the type of Christ in the generations of mankind. The thought of a spiritual nature that lies at the root of all these being that when the development to manhood would take place in mankind, then there would be born the Man like God in spiritual power and glory; it is Jesus, called Christ that is this perfect spiritual Man. The type in Enoch; the sign in Abraham; the prophet, priest and ruler as in Samuel meet in Jesus Christ; He is all that they represented; and fulfils all the promises conveyed to mankind through them.

But in the Gospel of Matthew there is not only the birth of Jesus, the Saviour, there are the wise men of the world interested in the promised King; the king that would destroy the child, and the flight into Egypt. The story is a network of the fulfilment of prophecy, all pointing out that the Seed, the King, the Consecrated One, is come at last, and that the day of salvation has dawned upon the earth. John the Baptist is the Messenger, preparing the way before the King, and his message to men is repentance "for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Before the temptation in the Desert, Jesus was baptised by John, thus fulfilling all that righteousness required of Him as Man as related to the past, and it is through this act of the perfect Man, linking Himself to fallen manhood, that the gates of heaven are thrown open, the Spirit descends in dovelike form on Him, and He is named to men as the beloved Son. The temptation in the Desert proves Christ to be a pure, perfect Man in the likeness of God, because the devil has no influence over Him, and all his temptations have no effect upon Him. Behold the Man! There is none like Him, this is the great Light come to dispel the darkness of Israel, and of the Gentiles and to give light and life to the heathen nations sitting in the region and shadow of death. What is His message to men? It is the same as that of His forerunner, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." In other words, it was so very near that those who heard His voice had only to listen, hear His call and obey, and the kingdom was conceived within their souls. The King has come, He has called His servants, they follow Him, and men begin to see what form this kingdom will take and who are to be it



beneficiaries. He went about teaching, preaching the Gospel, healing sickness and disease, casting out devils, and restoring the lunatic to sanity of mind ; and these, and similar works of grace and mercy, constitute the gospel of this new kingdom, that is at every man's hand, and may be in his heart, if only he will make the choice and follow the King.

It is not necessary here to follow up the Gospel stories which reveal to men this Kingdom of Heaven. Christians are so familiar with the gospel that they seem to be able to rehearse the very words ; they are like poetry and music to them, something in which they take delight, and yet the thought will arise that the forms, words and pleasant sounds, are prized more highly than the spirit of the Gospel and of Christ. What is the reason that men and women delight in the Gospel, and yet if they are asked why it is not obeyed, and life made conformable to its teaching, they confess that it is an ideal to which they are unable even to aspire, and that, for all practical purposes, it is not possible to live up to it in this world as it is. Here is the same strange anomaly as found in Joshua and Samuel ; the ideal is the true, right, good and gracious Will of God, but poor, frail, sinful men fail ; the ideal is beyond them, they lose heart, lapse and give up hope, it is useless to try to be like, imitate, and follow Christ ; this is not possible, it is far too high, man cannot attain to it. Is it not a truth well known, that men cannot fully understand this kingdom of Heaven though they know the laws upon which it rests, and approve them to be true, right and gracious ? And is it not a fact that men try to apply these laws, in various ways, as in the family, the Church, or in a nation, and the results are failure ; they will not work, men cannot rule themselves by them, and they are utterly impracticable in the State where truth, justice and judgment must be known and obeyed. This is really the problem of the Christian age, and of all ages ; but it is only another way of asking how the soul of man can be put right ? how the Will of God and the will of man can be brought to coincide ; in plain words, how man can become like God ? Is it not reasonable to conclude that the repeated failures in history, after the setting up of lofty ideals, have a real and valuable meaning ? And, seeing that men have thus failed in the past, may not an explanation be found in the order of development, when that order is understood ? That is the end desired and the means to the end. As it is difficult to comprehend a very complex work of machinery, during the process of the develop-

ment of the plant, and putting it in operation ; so how much more difficult it is to understand this marvellous work of God, which increases in its complexity age after age, especially when it is involved in the problems of evil, and the thousandfold errors and misconceptions of men ? The difficulty of the problem is here realised ; men know that there is an ideal and that it is their duty and privilege to conform to what they know is true, right and gracious ; but it is in vain, the will is present, the way may be seen, but how to perform what is known is the problem of life. This is a thought to be pondered upon ; it proves how much man is below his ideals ; it suggests that these ideals are not what man has attained by his own wisdom or skill ; in fact, they throw him back upon God and upon the methods used by God to raise men from their fallen state.

The unique fact in history is Christ ; not simply the Man but all that is involved in His history and His work of Grace. If He is considered, as represented in the Gospels, He is the man that every man ought to be ; He is the Saviour of men by His life and death ; by Example and Sacrifice. Has He a secret method in his life, and is there anything very mysterious in what He said and did ? Men cannot say so ; He told them His secret, He explained to them very fully His laws and thoughts ; He illustrated by many parables what His kingdom is like ; and He did and suffered what his followers ought to do and suffer for His sake. It really cannot be said that men are ignorant as to the laws of, and the life required in, the Kingdom of Heaven ; the story could not easily be put in fewer words ; and, upon the whole, those who are spiritual are not thought of as having much difficulty in understanding what Christ means in the Gospels. Upon the whole it seems to be a conclusion, pretty near the truth, that the difficulty does not lie with Christ, or the Gospel, but with men who have been too ready to follow the people of Israel, by imitating them in looking away from God's ideal set up in their midst, and taking men and institutions for examples, instead of Christ, the Ideal of the Christian age.

It is not necessary here to consider the details of the Gospels, in the light of the method of Christ, as indicating the scientific order that exists in them, as this has been done in a former work ; the object here is the historic development, and to attain this end a very brief sketch of the order may be sufficient. The point reached is that the prophets prepared the way for Christ, and

that he is the fulfilment of all their hopes and promises ; it has been shown that the introduction to the Gospel of Matthew links all the past with Christ, and that the Kingdom of Heaven He came to set up is the ideal, not of Christ's day but of the Spirit of God in all generations. To fall back upon the idea of life and its development, Christ is the Tree of Life ; in Him the seed ripened to perfect seed ; and it is this perfect seed of the Divine life that men are called to study. In the Gospels there may be traced this development in Christ ; as Jesus He is the perfect Man like God, and, when He came forth to set up His Kingdom, He had attained to manhood in the fullest sense. The baptism was His act of identifying Himself with men ; the temptation was the testing of His manhood ; and it is from this stage as Man, and Son of God, that men watch His actions, listen to His words, try to think His thoughts, so that they may apprehend what these mean. All this may not be so simple as men think ; in reality there is a unique stage of development begun in His teaching, preaching and works of mercy ; the Man in these things is not Man in manhood, but the Son of God, the Saviour of men, redeeming men from the power of evil ; taking their burdens upon Himself and teaching them the only way by which they can be saved and become the children of God. It is very important to understand what is meant here ; this Son of God is not like other men, and other men are not like this Son of God ; this is not manhood as a moral being may be moral and Godlike in his moral nature ; it is actually the Divine grace, mercy and love made manifest before the eyes of men ; and men were so blind that they could not see God in the Man. The life of Christ sums up this unique manifestation of God ; it is what no man in the same sense, in his manhood, could possibly be or do. He is not merely the ideal, He is the Archetype, and in this men know they have no position. Christ was inherently righteous ; He attained or made manifest perfect righteousness by His life ; the difference betwixt Christ and other men is not one of righteousness or right only, it is specially that of redeeming men from evil that they may be set free to do right ; it is not a moral problem of manhood ; it is the Divine problem of salvation and redemption, and he is the Redeemer, Saviour and Deliverer of all the redeemed. He is righteous by inherent right ; He proved His righteousness as Man, and thus became the **LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**. He became the Deliverer of men from evil, thus asserting a Divine Sonship not possessed by any man ; and this work of grace transcends moral righteousness,

as the heavens transcend the earth. As the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS He is King over all men by moral right, but as Redeemer, His claim is Divine in grace ; it moves the hearts of men as by new words of poetry, and by the music of the soul ; and these are expressed in their most beautiful forms by Miriam, Hannah and Mary. Further, the study of Christ must be carried into that mysterious sphere of thought where the human and divine, the moral nature and grace, are in harmony with the will of God, as permitted for a period, with the consenting will on Christ's part to become, in a sense, man in bodily form, as subject to the powers of evil. This is the climax of Divine grace ; it permits evil to appear to be regnant ; allows men to arrest the Son of God ; shuts the eyes for the moment when justice is trodden in the dust and truth despised ; withholds the hand when the Redeemer is spit upon, mocked and buffeted ; and restrains the thunderbolts of heaven when the Man bears His Cross, wears His Crown of Thorns, and is crucified upon the cursed tree. Of all mysteries surely there cannot be any more wonderful than these ; assuming that he is the Son of God, the guilt of men is outrageous ; it flashes out in lurid light in that brief record of good as bruised by evil, in that fearful struggle ; and that record brands mankind with eternal shame and disgrace. It is the darkness that hides the foul deed ; and were the eyes of men opened to see what all these things mean, there never could be one good word said in favour of that ethical goodness which some men seem to think is inherent in sinful men. This is the Divine, Gracious Sacrifice, acceptable to God and efficient for men ; it is God, in Christ, taking all these consequences of sin upon Himself, and having fulfilled and finished the work of salvation, His Spirit returned to the Father of Spirits, to conquer sin and death, and to give eternal life to men. These varied aspects of the life, the works and the death of Christ are summed up in the Gospels ; they can be studied in their order by the method of Christ, in which by the Spirit of Christ men are now permitted to read the thoughts of God in their scientific order. If these thoughts are clearly understood, it will become quite plain that the Gospels are not merely what men have ever conceived them to be, the glad tidings of salvation to all men ; they really contain the manifold explanations that men desire, and may acquire, of the method of Redemption by Jesus Christ. The blurred details of history require to be focussed upon Christ so that He may be seen as the perfect creation of God, as the Man in the likeness of

God. All the history in Genesis and in Israel must be brought to a focus, and then out of the ruin, chaos, darkness of the past, in the glowing, glorious light, there will be seen the Man in the Image of God. This Man is Transfigured in the midst of men, and is seen to be the Son of God in Grace and redeeming Love, and it is as Saviour, Redeemer, Deliverer, Lord, that for the brief space of about three years He goes in and out among men, working His mighty work of deliverance, overthrowing the powers of evil, causing even death to give up his claims upon a child, upon a man on the way to the grave, and upon a man who had been dead and in his grave three days. It may not be too fanciful to suggest the thought that in this wonderful Life there may be traced in all the Gospels a fourfold development like that of the method of the Spirit; first there is made manifest a great faith, second a glorious hope, third a divine patience, and in the fourth the very love of God and heaven. In other words, this Man reveals the Father by faith, the Son as the hope of the world, the Spirit in that patience of life that is so wonderful, and in that fourth stage, the climax of the whole revelation, it is God as Love that is arrested, shamefully treated, tried by unjust judges, and is compelled to wear the crown of thorns, carry His cross, and give up His life upon it in the midst of the mockery and derision of men who have no conception of what this transaction means in which they are engaged.

In the light of these thoughts it may not be out of place to glance over the past, and try to see in what way this development fits in with the involution in Genesis, or the pre-vision contained in that wonderful book. There are the ten generations in historical development from the heavens and earth to Jacob, as summed up in Joseph and his brethren. Numbers one to six are the natural, and the fruit is Abraham; numbers seven to ten are Ishmael to Jacob, and the fruit is the beloved son Joseph and Egypt, and these generations are spiritual. It is Ishmael, or the redemption from Egypt that begins the spiritual, as the seeking after knowledge of God in spiritual thought, in the Desert of intellectualism which, as is well known, deals with words, signs and symbols of truth; but the truth spiritually is ever within and behind word and form. In the Land of Promise with Joshua, Samuel, and David, the position is changed; the central point here is the moral nature, the nation and kingdom, and it is within this realm that all real spiritual conflicts must take place. The

record of the conflicts in Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings, is a true presentation of the moral realm in man involving the intellect and grace; and what can be seen, studied, and spiritually understood in these books will give the interpretation, by outward forms and actions, of that Kingdom of Heaven yet to come. In the son of Abraham there is a kingdom of Jacob, the natural Israel; but the true Son is Jesus Christ, and it is His Kingdom that reveals the spiritual Kingdom of Heaven. The ideal embodied in the Christian dispensation, not as outward and visible, but as inward and spiritual, is that attainable by men who follow and imitate Jesus Christ. The suggested generations of Esau are in their nature spiritual; they are the highest man has attained by the spiritual in them as the summation of what was attained by Israel and Edom in their manifold experiences. There is great complexity in the story of Isaac, and of Esau, and Jacob as the generations of Isaac. The details of story and history may not seem to follow in orderly succession; it is the nation that is kept in view throughout the life of Isaac, and it is in the Restoration that the great preparation for the coming of Christ is specially fore-shadowed. The link betwixt Esau, Jacob and Joseph may be found in these words. "Esau (is) the father of the Edomites. And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph being seventeen years old was feeding the flock with his brethren." In other words, the spirit of the kingdom of Israel, in its outward worldly conditions, was that of Edom, the earthly; within this land Jacob, the supplanter, the religious order, which possessed inheritance and promise, as earthly forms with spiritual aspirations; this land was Jacob's possession, but Isaac dwelt in it as a stranger. Within this land the generations of Jacob lived; there are sixteen years, generations, men, prophets, and then the beloved son, loved by Israel more than all his other children, comes upon the stage with his coat of many colours, the hatred of his brethren and the heavenly dreams. It is interesting to observe that the prophetic books from Isaiah to Malachi are sixteen, or two cycle series, and at the end of these, there appears among men the beloved Son with His robe of pure light refracted into many colours among men, and that hatred of His brethren which issued in His death.

These seem to be the connecting links betwixt Genesis, the kingdom of Israel and the coming of Christ. In the first the

germ seeds ; in the second the visible order and development ; and in the New Testament the spiritual kingdom ; as pre-figured in Genesis ; as fore-shadowed in Israel ; and as becoming spiritual, true, and real, in the New Testament. To compress the conception into as brief space as possible, and yet follow the method of Christ, it may be found sufficient to put the usual questions to the books of the New Testament and see what the result will be.

The generations of Jacob in Genesis, point forward to a beloved son ; the generations of Jesus Christ indicated by what way the Son has come among men from Abraham the father of the faithful ; there are many links in the chain but Abraham is father and Jesus Christ is Son. Enough has been stated in connection with the Gospel of Matthew to indicate that in a special sense it is the link with the past ; it tells **WHENCE** Christ came ; and that through Abraham He is the Son promised ; but greater than Isaac, seeing He is the Son of God. In figure Melchizedek, priest and king in Salem, represents Christ, to whom Abraham gave tithes ; and it is by such illustrations that the eternal glory of Christ is revealed to men. He came as Man ; He lived as Man ; He redeemed mankind by His life work ; He was sacrificed for, and by men, that they might be saved ; He proclaimed the principles or laws of His society, or kingdom ; He set up an organisation, with twelve disciples, to be taught the method of His realm ; and in this way there was a kind of transference of the spiritual realm, in which there is development, from Israel, or Judaism, to Christianity. This is not the problem of a life in its individual form ; there is in it that Seed of Life which in due time will be made manifest in the Roman world. He is the Seed from the past as fruition ; but He is specially the Seed of the future, and there is vital union with Christ, and the Christian Church and people, throughout the Christian dispensation.

To the Gospel according to Mark the question **WHEN** may be put, for the purpose of following the method of Christ ? The response comes in the two first words of the Gospel "the beginning." When was this ; when Christ was born in Bethlehem ? This beginning may be linked with the beginning in the first chapter of Genesis ; because, whilst it may be true that the story of creation is that of the revelation of the physical creation, it would also appear as if the story of re-creation is rooted in that of creation, and thus creation is a gospel, the gospel of the begin-

ning in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This is not a new conception ; in fact, it is so defined by John in the opening of the fourth Gospel ; there He is named the Word, the Word with God, and the Word as God. Looking at this Gospel from this stand-point, what a wonderful summation of history is contained in these words, "As it is written in the prophets ; Behold I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee." This is the When of all the prophets in all the ages, because it is certainly true that they have all been His messengers preparing His way. The last messenger is John the Baptist ; he is come preaching repentance, and that the kingdom of heaven is near. The theme of this Gospel, however, is not the kingdom but the Man, as Son of God specially, as come to heal diseases, to cleanse the unclean ; and it was for this end He called the twelve to be with him, so that they also might do the same works of mercy. It is as the Son of God that the unclean and the insane recognise Him ; before Him the powers of evil are powerless ; and the sleeping dead child is made quick to live and hear that voice in which there is the power of life. It is as the Son of God in peace that the dove rests upon Him at His baptism ; and when transfigured in glory, He is named the beloved Son with a special mission and message to men. It is also worthy of notice that the centurion in charge of the soldiers around the Cross, who noted carefully all that took place during that three hours, was impelled to testify, "Truly this Man was the Son of God."

It would appear that the Gospel according to Luke strikes the note Why ? It begins by explaining why Luke wrote to the "excellent Theophilus," a Greek friend, so that he might have a perfect understanding of the whole story of the Gospel from the first, as from eye witnesses, and from ministers familiar with all the facts. The object of this Gospel is to confirm faith by the certainty of evidence, so that the hope cherished might be fruitful. What Luke wrote as a perfectly credible witness about Elizabeth and John, Mary and Jesus, Zecharias and his doubt, Gabriel the angel and his messages, are familiar stories to Christian children ; but the Why of Christ's coming is specially recorded ; it was as the Son of the Highest, to receive the throne of David and to reign for ever over an endless kingdom. He came to save His people from their enemies to perform the mercy promised, to keep the covenant, to give light to those sitting in darkness under death's shadow, and to guide men into the



way of peace. The signs of the birth confirm the promises of angels and men, He is born to be Saviour, to bring the highest glory to God, to create a peaceful earth, and to bring in the reign of goodwill among men. Simeon saw God's salvation in the little babe resting in his arms; and through past preparations there was seen in the midst the Light of the World and the Glory of Israel. These are interesting events for this reason, they may be said to sum up all the past, and they introduce the thoughtful student into that Israel of the Spirit that has been watching and waiting for redemption in Israel. Men are told here why God passes by kings, priests, and wise men who glory in their power, position, and wisdom, and graciously condescends to come so near to the mother in Israel, Elizabeth, to the modest, gentle, God-fearing maiden, Mary, and to those who cherished in their hearts faith in God and hope for the coming of His kingdom. It is very pleasant to watch this Child in the temple, and in the home; to overhear the gentle mother and her Son in their conversation; to discern the direction in which His thoughts are turning, and His anticipation of the work lying before Him. Even at twelve years of age He is wiser than His mother; and, like a wise woman, she listens to His sayings and treasures them up in her heart. Why are all these stories told with such sweet simplicity and spiritual beauty? They are for the little children in heart, young or old, who are perfectly satisfied that they are all true; even for the children who know and understand what is childlike. Away with all serpent-like suggestions, doubts, and criticisms from this hallowed place in the sacred word; they are utterly misplaced; and those who could use them critically have no feeling of shame left. This is the sacred home of Israel; this is the House of God; this is the true Church of Christ; and here the faithful enjoy the harmony and sweet peace they love. Is it so very wonderful that Christians in the spirit should feel offended, deeply hurt, pained to the very heart, when irreverent, callous sceptics rush into this sacred chamber of thought and dishonour themselves, show their own ignorance and incapacity to deal with such problems by trying to unveil what they do not understand, and what cannot, in the very nature of things, be subject to intellectual critical reasonings. There is a time and place for modest reticence; and a truly scientific mind would instinctively feel the incongruity of attempting to place the spiritual under the heel of the physical. If men would blush with

shame to express their thoughts on the sanctities of the home and family relations, then a similar feeling ought to be realised here; these stories are for the heart and the home; they are to be kept in the heart and pondered upon, and not torn to pieces by the analytical critic, or made impure and stained by the pen and ink of the literary writer. Why are these stories so sweet and sacred; so near the heart of the faithful, and so far from the heart of the critic? They are so just because they are true revelations of the heart of God to the hearts of men. This is where the redeemed fall down and adore God for His unspeakable condescension, and realise how utterly unworthy they are of such a Divine love. The critic is utterly unworthy to see such visions of angels; to hear such Divine messages of salvation; to listen to the Child's voice; indeed, it is to be feared that he is as far from the heaven of wisdom and love as he can possibly be, and such an one, in such a spirit, cannot become wise in truth, righteousness, and grace, and find favour with God and man.

Why should this story take notice of an emperor, governor, tetrachs, and high priests? Surely the very last men in the world must such men be to understand this King and His kingdom. This is true; they are not helpers in the kingdom of heaven, they are here as signposts to tell men when the Christ was born, and from these signs to lead them to consider the state of the world at that time. The world is seen as under the iron heel of Rome, the most powerful empire known, and it is the Child Jesus that is destined to overthrow the Roman Empire and all similar forms of despotic rule on the earth by His Kingdom of Truth, Righteousness and Grace. Why should the episode of the ministry of John the Baptist be summed up, added to that of empires and priests, before the genealogy of Jesus is given? John as prophet and messenger represents the past, and thus he is seen in his mission, in preaching righteousness, and as put in prison; then the Holy Ghost descends in a special manner on the Beloved Son, the Son of all the generations of men, and above all, the Son of God. Then follows the history of the temptation, the life of holiness, the saving of men from the powers of evil, the kingdom in its organic form and work by the disciples, the extension of the work by the mission of the seventy, their success and their joy, and the many parables and illustrations relating to the kingdom. Why did all these things take place as recorded in the Scriptures?

This was the fulfilment of law by Moses, prediction by prophets, and the utterances of the hearts of the saints in psalms. There was a Divine necessity the disciples could not at that time comprehend, specially as relating to suffering and death ; but all these things were required so that repentance and forgiveness of sins might be preached among all nations from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. The disciples are the chosen witnesses of all these things, they have seen them and testify as to their truth, but all that they had received of training and teaching was not enough ; the power to witness, preach, suffer, and die for Christ, was not in themselves ; it was not in words and signs that they were to be strong and Christ-like ; there was still another very important promise of the Father to be fulfilled ; for this they were to wait, and by the coming of the Holy Spirit of Christ they would be endowed with spiritual power from heaven. In the attitude of blessing He went up into heaven ; they worshipped Him, returned to Jerusalem, “and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.” It is the endowment of Christ by the Holy Spirit beyond any measurement possible for men, that is the great theme of this Gospel ; it is spiritually illimitable ; it comes from God through all the generations of men, and all men are endowed with the Spirit to extents they cannot comprehend, and in ways they cannot explain. The question may be an open one as to what extent a perfect moral being could understand this mystery of the Spirit ? Perhaps the utmost possible for the perfect creature is that of knowledge of order and law ; and that conformity to the Will of God by man as thus understood is spiritual harmony. Christ as endowed with the Spirit had those instinctive, intuitive, spiritual perceptions which men are unable to apprehend. Men are Spirit-guided they know not how, when they love and seek after truth and righteousness ; but to rise to the conscious operations of the Holy Spirit within the soul would appear to be a stage that man cannot reach under present conditions in this life. Indeed, the mystery is psychic in its nature ; the Spirit endows and guides the man, and intuitively in the soul the man obeys the Spirit. Is not this right, and what reasonable creatures ought to expect ; the endowment given can be withdrawn at any moment, the promised power may be manifold, but to the disciples it was at this time the power of faith, of ardent hope, of patient perseverance, in courage and love, to witness before men of all that they had seen, and knew, of Jesus Christ their Saviour and King. The limitations

of the Spirit upon man may thus, in a limited sense, be known, they depend upon what the man has seen and can see ; the truths he knows and can express ; this would be the normal environment of the spirit of man ; but as with prophet and psalmist, the Spirit can use that knowledge in ways that man cannot comprehend ; therefore it follows that a man is dependent upon the Spirit, and thus he ought to tarry until the Spirit is pleased to endow the soul with divine power and purity to do the Will of God.

In studying the third Gospel by, or in the light of, the question Why ? The result seems to be that the soul of man comes face to face with the infinite problem of the Holy Spirit ; and with the light thrown upon this subject from many quarters it can be seen that this knowledge is Divine, and men can only touch the fringes of the wonderful questions yet to be presented to them for their consideration. With the Gospel of John another stage of thought is reached, and in the light of the Kingdom of God, by the method of Christ, the strange question to be asked is this : In WHAT way has the Holy Spirit made manifest the Will of God by Jesus Christ ? It will be observed that there is suggested here a two-fold line of thought ; thus, if the third Gospel is that of the Spirit, in a special sense as revealing the purpose, design, relations, and manifold wisdom of the Holy Spirit ; then is the fourth Gospel the embodiment of that conception ? Just as the physical creation in what it reveals is the work of the Spirit in thought, act and deed, Is Christ the Spiritual Creation of the Holy Spirit as the revelation of Salvation ? Thus the questions here as related to Christ are, What is He ? and, What is His life ?

For men who study this Gospel, as a means of instruction in the Kingdom of Heaven ? The attitude of the thinker may be supposed to be that of the disciple John ; the problem is one of the deepest conceivable for the human intellect as conjoined with faith in God, and thus it would take this shape, What can man know of Jesus Christ from every source of knowledge attainable ; and in what form will he be able to express his thoughts ?

What can man know of Jesus Christ ? The line of thought of the beloved disciple takes something like this form. It is Word that begins all that is spiritual ; the man forms by thought a concrete concept that expresses the thought intellectually, and that act is a creation. It is so in this sense, that it forms order out of chaotic ideas ; on the one side lies darkness and chaos ; there

is a diamond-like flash of light and this is the meaning of the Word, of any true word. Behind the Word, to man there is chaos, darkness, thoughts; all that is conceivable as in the Spirit; and beyond the thought, or Spirit, the Reality, God. Here man is taught this very important thought, that he is a limited creature; the veil falls and the revelation is God. The Word is Creator. The latest conceptions by the way of science is to this effect: there are no *things*; all is thought, order and law, and science hopes to be, or to represent, the summation of all created words; behind the words of science, Thought, Reality, God. Embody all this in one Word, and the Name is Power, or the agnostics' concept Force. Life is inherent in Christ; it is because He lives and possesses Power that men are endowed with light, that is power, life and spirit; that light Divine and human, was like a star shining in the dark earth, or in the soul of a man, and there was no comprehension or response to that light. This ends the first series of four principles; there comes a change in the order of thought and the method is changed. The Grace of God is sent forth, even out of the darkness, by prophets, and specially as by John the last of them, to witness to men that the Light of heaven had touched their souls, and that the light in them was responsive to the Light from heaven. The object of this witness bearing is plain: it is that by the testimony of such men, in the darkness, other men might be led to believe in the Light. This Light is the intellectual power of reason, and this is the Light that enlightens every man in the world. Every man is a ray of that Divine Light; but the rays being refracted through earthly media, they had lost their unity and their identity; they knew not that they came from the Light, they were even as divine rays of light, refracted into the darkness. This is the end of human intellectualism, it is darkness not light; and surely history has now demonstrated this to be the truth. There is the passage from the intellectual to the moral realm. He came, the Light and Moral Life of the universe, to His children of light and life, to the Jewish priests and people, who had received special preparation for His visit. They did not know Him, they would not receive Him, they were in the darkness and loved the darkness, and thus they were unable to see his Divine glory. There were some who received Him, and the result was that they received from Him the right and privilege to become sons of God, but this honour is not by the blood of heredity, by outward fleshly sacrament, or ceremony, or by any intellectual theory of theology, it is of

God. The Word thus made manifest took this most wonderful step down from the highest heavens to the lowest earth. He actually lived in a tabernacle of flesh, like other men, and dwelt among them, full of grace and truth, and this Glory of the Son of God was actually seen by men upon this earth. The vision of love is the vision of grace and truth. As plain matter of fact, to those who are able to comprehend all that is here revealed, there is to be found in these few words the quintessence of the Divine Wisdom, it is the method of Christ, and it is the harmonious union and communion of the Bible, Nature, and man. What is Christ? He is this Word of God that reveals God by the light of intellectual reasoning, in harmony with moral law, and where sin had come and reigned He came as Grace and Truth, to reveal the Glory of God by the divine method of salvation. What is creation in all its manifestations, physical, psychical, moral, and spiritual? All may be summed up thus: Words of Christ, named powers, and every man is a Word of God, like Christ, the most marvellous complex thoughts of the Holy Spirit, and his being is a portion of that Reality named God. This is an attempt to interpret the concepts of John the disciple in the light of the thoughts of men, whose faces are turned toward the Light, and are reflecting His Glory. It is not a vision of the market place, for children, for unbelieving critics, or for those who will not receive Christ. It is for those who love, believe, think, seek after truth, righteousness and grace, and it is to be treasured up in the heart and cherished as Divine Wisdom. This vision is the Pearl of inestimable value. To gain it men may freely dispose of all other pearls, because here they will find all that is in all other pearls, and all other values are to be decided by the intrinsic value that is to be found in this Pearl of great price.

What is John and the prophets? Not the Christ; they are as lights in the darkness, or voices in the wilderness; they are as forerunners, with messages for men; and they may even try to wash men as with the water of baptism; but all their labours are in vain, unless they express this great truth, that there is One in the midst, unseen, and, in a sense, unknown, whose lowliest servants they are not worthy to be, and whose glory they cannot express in words. What is Jesus? He is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He is Spirit endowed like a dove in the spirit of peace and love; He has a special baptism for men, it is that of the Holy Ghost; and He possesses this power,

because He is the Son of God. Why should men go after Him, to find out what He is, and His mission among men? Honest, true, faithful, guileless souls must seek and find Him, and when they do, they will discover that He knows them and their thoughts. He is the perfect Seer in this world of darkness; and when men apprehend this thought, they make the greatest of discoveries, they have found the Son of God, and the King of Israel. Such discoveries as these must elate, and cause joy in any soul, but these are only earthly discoveries; the future contains greater wonders than these; for those who receive the power to see will perceive that heaven is now thrown open to men, and that through Christ the angels of God are continually ascending with praise and thanksgiving to God and returning to men with abundant blessings. What is the meaning of the marriage feast at Cana, and the manifestation of His Divine glory, by changing water into wine? There is the revelation of power, and that power is used for a definite purpose. It is said to be wine that makes the heart of man glad, when the gift is not abused; and it is by the doorway of marriage that there is entrance to a consecrated home and love. These are very old symbols, and they are ever true; the Christian home and life rises far above anything known to men before the coming of Christ; that old wine was almost spent among men, and the married life throughout the earth had been much degraded. It is here, therefore, at the fountain of life, in the home of love, that Christ is called to work His first miracle as a sign to men; but the very call so to act is a sign to Himself that the Life He possesses must now be used in this way, and at this time, as the first step toward Calvary and the Cross. If the Fountain of pure Love that is in His heart is to be made available for men, then here is the fit beginning. It is by marriage, the home, and love, that men are to be redeemed; and thus it was at Cana that the first of the sacred drops of His life-blood was poured out for men. Is it any wonder that the words He uttered to His mother were so very strange? The mother knew it not, and yet it was her voice that uttered the call to give His love, His life, for the friends at the feast. He gave, and they received, but they knew not that the wine they drank was the first-fruits of salvation; a blessing upon the state of married life, the sanctification and consecration of the family and the home. The home and the marriage feast is set up as a contrast to the state of the temple and public worship in Jerusalem; there

love and consecration were not known ; it was covetousness and business, wealth and position, mere outward forms, without spiritual worship ; and thus the scourge of small cords and the purging of His Father's House. What right had He to do these things ; and what sign could He give to men that He possessed the authority that He claimed ? The sign He gave was that the temple in which they worshipped was like unto His Own Body ; it was a symbol to be kept clean and consecrated to the worship of God ; the Real Temple was His body, which they would cause to be put to death ; and He would raise it again in renewed life in three days. What is the meaning of that visit of Nicodemus to Christ in the dark night ? It is the way men come to Christ at all times when they discover that they require a Teacher of spiritual truth ; they are in the state of darkness ; and it is no shame for a man to strive to escape out of that darkness, if he can see even by one ray of light the way in which he ought to walk. This conversation, it is said, teaches the doctrine of regeneration, and a new spiritual birth in a spiritual world to spiritual conditions ; to many this is as the beginning of spiritual life, and until this change takes place the condition of the soul is spiritual death. This conception ought not to be enforced by intolerant reasoning, because it can be seen that the past of history is not swept away as if it had no life spiritually ; it is not assumed that Mary, Elizabeth, Zecharias, Anna, Simeon, the disciples He had called, and the family in Cana, were all dead in trespasses and sins. It is not to be assumed that Nicodemus had no spiritual life ; the very fact that He was drawn to Christ proved that they were magnetically united, and not mutually repellant. The same spirit was in the Saviour and in the sinner ; the distinction was one of degree and fulness, not of difference. What Nicodemus was seeking after was the kingdom of God ; it may be as a visible order upon the earth ; and, it would almost seem, that Jesus, reading his thoughts, discerned how far the inquirer had travelled upon the way toward the Kingdom, and the real difficulty that lay in his path. The man would see the Kingdom, and he cannot find it in Jerusalem, or anywhere else. He had become convinced that Sadduceean priests, with their covetous ambition ; Pharisaism, with its unreality and hypocrisy ; and Herodianism, with its time-serving, earthly ambitions ; could never bring the Kingdom of God among men. These visible conditions are the womb within which the good



man is living ; he cannot look beyond them ; and what he cannot understand is in what way the Kingdom of God will come. It is as true to-day as it was 1,900 years ago ; and good men should learn the lesson given that night to Nicodemus. The Kingdom of God will not come through any church that is covetous, carnal, earthly, and ambitious ; it will not come through churchism, with its ritual observances, hypocritical pretences of sanctity, and special sacredness of priests or ministers ; and, certainly, it can never come by despotic emperors or kings, by selfish ambitious ministers of state, and divisions of parties in parliaments, who seek their own special interests, and not the common weal. Society to-day is, in tone, temper, thought, word, and action, not so very different from the society of Jerusalem when Nicodemus came to Christ by night ; and it is just as true that the need of the hour is this being born again to the spiritual life, by the Spirit of God, and without this, Europe, the whole world, is in as critical a condition as Jerusalem and Judæa was in the days of Christ. The stage of development here is that of the Spirit in the kingdom of heaven. Christ sees all these things plainly. To Him these are but earthly details. Had He taught what was heavenly no one would have understood His words ; and He gives a little sample of this kind of knowledge when He speaks of ascending to, and descending from, heaven ; and yet all the time being in heaven. It was not the heavenly He came to teach men, but the way to the heavenly ; and His illustration is Moses, the serpent raised up, the dying people, the look of faith, and the end, eternal life. What then is the testimony of the Spirit, and of Christ, as spiritual fact for inquiring souls, who would seek God and His Kingdom ? It is the amazing love of God, in giving His Son to save men, so that they perish not ; and that He did not send Christ "to condemn the world ; but that the world through Him might be saved." It is a very serious thought that the light of truth is in the world ; but men, being evil, and choosing to remain so, will not come to the light for reproof and correction in righteousness. Those who do what they know to be true and right act differently ; they come to the Light and then they see that their works are "wrought in God." The contrast is a striking one ; those who hate light are found in the darkness, in the midst of a chaos that is hopeless ; those who come to the light, and walk in it, find that their order of life is law, it is divine ; and it is in God.

There is a little incident narrated in the Gospel after this spiritual revelation of the Kingdom of God worthy of a moment's attention. Let it be taken into consideration in the light of the story of Nicodemus, and the question to be asked is this : What were the disciples of the prophets, and the good people, Pharisees and church people generally, doing about the time when Jesus was giving to men this spiritual religion that is almost heavenly ? They were discussing, wrangling over the problem of purifying, in other words talking about fasts and feasts, sacraments and ceremonies. Christ's Word is that sanctification, purification, is the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul of man, in conjunction with the spirit of man, to change his nature, so that he shall be like Christ; and these foolish children waste their time over children's lesson books, when they might be sitting at their Lord's feet, drinking in the purest water of life, as it flows from the Throne of God. Of all the ironies of life in the Christian age, and specially at this day, could anything more foolish be seen among men than what is seen in societies and churches. These men have not merely the Gospel of John in their hands—they have Christ in their midst, and the Holy Spirit in their hearts ; and yet they wrangle, and discuss these subjects, as to how, and by what means, men may be made pure, holy, saved, and sanctified, through Churches, fasts, sacraments, and other means of grace. Can they not perceive that all these things are out of date, that they may have had a fitting place in Judaism, in Mosaism, or even in heathenism, but that in the family of God, in the Church of Christ, among men made free by the Spirit of God, they are anachronisms, and they belong to the people that lived before Christ came into the world. If religious teachers, in the light of these two incidents, will read carefully the thoughts uttered by John, when these foolish wranglers would have brought an atmosphere of envy and jealousy betwixt himself and Christ, they will see a man worthy to be imitated. The goodness and greatness of John, by the Spirit within him, is almost Christ-like. This is John's sunset utterance ; the glory of Christ and of heaven rests upon him. After this what could he expect but arrest, the gloomy dungeon, the martyr's death, and the eternal crown of glory.

In the light of the third chapter, the fourth becomes a psychic study, and the question that arises is this : What is the true meaning that underlies the story of Samaria, the woman at the well, and the passing visit of Jesus, the Christ ? Men are familiar

with the story, but it does not follow that they know the true meaning. It can hardly be conceived that John, the disciple, had psychic conceptions, according to the method of Christ, in his mind when writing the Gospel, and thus it is all the more wonderful that the stories recorded follow this order. This story is the visible form into which the spiritual thought is enshrined, and here the figures are Samaria, the well the woman, her husbands, her life, and Christ's visit. Samaria is the capital of the ten tribes of Israel, the well is Jacob's; the inheritance contains the remains of Joseph and of Joshua. In other words, this is the heart of Israel, as Judah and Jerusalem may be conceived as the intellect for thought and the moral for government. The woman may represent all the past with all the powers that have reigned in Samaria; and the condition is that of subjection to Rome, which is not a true husband for a state that represents the heart of God. But the well is there still; it lives through all the ages, and supplies the wants of the creature, no matter who is lord and husband. It is not necessary to illustrate what is meant, the story is an illustration, a parable; and the concrete fact is the human heart with its experiences in history, and the mystery of that well that ever lives, and is ever springing up to the life eternal. Christ, the Blessed One, sits by this well of every human soul wearied with His journey, and being thirsty He longs to drink out of this fountain that He has created. The Prince of Life asks for a cup of the water of life from a poor sinful soul that knows not the value of this living water, or from whence it came, and thus the story becomes a parable, and the parable gives place to the purest spiritual teaching; and it is this, Samaria, Jerusalem, Rome, Churches, Chapels and all visible places and things vanish out of sight, and there is seen a poor soul seeking the living water and to worship the Father in spirit and truth, and the answer is, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship in spirit and in truth." It is useless for men to try to reason and use their critical powers upon this story; it is not to be understood in that way. It is the Saviour, the sinner and the well of salvation; it is a series of spiritual surprises; it is to discover Christ, and that He knows all things that the sinner has done; it is to forget pitcher, water, Christ and His thirst, and in the excitement of the discovery to begin to tell, as a true witness, the great discovery of life. Just as the wise man of Greece when he made his discovery of an earthly problem could not restrain

himself but rushed into the streets crying Eureka! Eureka! So this poor soul, when her life-blood mixed with the life-blood of Christ, and she discovered that they were one, by the living water, she could not restrain herself but must tell everyone that she had found Christ. All this reads like an incident in a revival of religion, and it confirms this fact, that when people act in this extraordinary way they have been highly favoured by Christ. He has come very near to them; they have been talking together by the well; they have had a revelation which transcends the earthly and the critical, and those who thus meet Christ say, "We have heard Him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Another form of this heart religion is to be found in the story of the nobleman and his dying son; to the truly earnest, seeking soul signs and words are of no value whatever; the case is too urgent and the danger too great. Away with all talk about signs; the cry of the heart is intense with feeling, and thus the words "Sir, come down, ere my child die." This cry has the genuine ring of sincerity in it, and the reply is brief and to the point: "Go thy way; thy son liveth."

What is the meaning of the story of Christ healing the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, who had been paralysed and without power for the long period of thirty-eight years? The place has five porches, it is the meeting place for all the impotent, and they are all waiting for the descent of the angel and the troubling of the waters that they may snatch a blessing from heaven, even as beggars at the wayside get their alms from those who pass by. The place in the stage of development for this story is that of the intellect; and the five porches into the pool may give a hint that they have something to do in illustrating what is meant. If Christ is pleased to go to Samaria to reveal to a woman her own heart, her sinfulness and the true spirit of worship, it may be expected that He will also visit that place representing the intellect; and there, by a sign, try to lead men to think upon and ponder over the meaning. This sign is not a simple one; it deals with a long period of time; it is a paralysis that man cannot cure; there is a lack of initiation that hinders movement; and there is a kind of hopelessness, a want of faith, about the man, that makes men exclaim, How could the man expect to be cured when he was in this hopeless frame of mind? The man somehow is a very disappointing patient; he is a grumbler before his cure;

he has not a word of thanks for the great mercy he receives ; he gives no response to the solemn warning not to sin again ; and after all that had been done, and said, he went, in the base spirit of an informer, to tell the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him ; and they persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him. Of course all these signs are world wide in their application ; but the question here for thoughtful spiritual men is this : what does this sign mean for a man, a nation, or for many nations ? Bethesda is the place of healing ; there are many who need to be healed ; but it is not every day that the water possesses healing power. It pleases God, by Divine wisdom, not merely to give to men the place of healing ; He intervenes at special periods, and those who are waiting, ready and prepared, are healed. In other words, as men look at the development of the scheme of salvation, they see that at intervals in history there is a descent of the Angel of Mercy in some form ; the presence of the angel is known by the movement on the face of the waters ; or the many thoughts of men, the period of inquiry, and the seeking after truth for the purpose of salvation. What happens at such periods in the history of mankind ? Those who are ready are healed, saved, and go into the feast provided for them in a new era of intellectual inquiry ; those who are not are left stranded upon the shore of time ; they remain impotent, blind, halt, and withered. They would not develop ; they would not break the bonds of custom, belief, theology, literature, art, poetry, religion, and thus they remain as helpless wrecks ; they cannot be moved, they will not move, they do not see how to move ; they are spiritually enthralled by the evil spirit in their past ; they remain so ; and those who have the new life blood of intellectual power pass them by, pitying them for their conservatism ; and, at the same time, knowing that they have sinned against the light, and that the punishment is the result of their own folly. This principle can be applied to all nations that have fallen behind in the race of civilisation ; they have limited the work of the intellect of men for their own selfish purposes ; and the end has ever been moral deterioration, intellectual stagnation, and degrading forms of religion. It is not to be supposed that those who pass on and leave their comrades behind are sure to reach the goal toward which they advance ; they may make many blunders, but if they are free, true, honest, faithful, then when the waters are moved again they will seek to know the meaning and go forward :

with the ever rising current that is to be found in the river of life. It is hardly necessary to point out that this same principle is applicable to the individual at every stage of life ; and at every period when the waters are moved in the soul of man his question should be as to the Will of the Lord in all such movements ; and thus be prepared to make every visitation of the angel a time of grace and blessing, for intellectual development, moral improvement and spiritual growth. The remarks of Christ to the Jews after this sign may be profitably studied, with this leading thought in view, that the realm of thought is personal and intellectual. There is a sense in which all that lives and is below the intellectual stage of development is dead ; they do not see the hand of God ; they do not hear the Father's Voice ; they do not understand the thoughts of Christ ; they will not search the Scriptures to find the truth required ; and they will not come to Christ to receive eternal life. How can men believe in God sincerely, seek after truth earnestly, and follow Christ fully, if their great desire is to receive honour from men and to bestow honours upon their friends ; the Fountain of all honour is God, and the promise is that all who seek to honour Him they will be honoured. In this matter of intellectual probity Christ will not be the accuser against His brethren ; the accuser in this realm is Moses and the law ; if therefore men do not believe what Moses wrote for the guidance of men, in what is suitable for intellectual and moral ends, before adult age, whilst under training for the higher spiritual state, then it follows that the sceptical spirit of unbelief will gain the ascendancy and the power to believe and understand the words of Christ will be lost.

The next incident in this Gospel deals with the problem of life and how it is sustained. The key to the story seems to lie in the question Jesus put to Philip when He saw the great company coming to Him as He sat on the mountain side, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat ?" What can we, you, Philip, and I, Christ, do for all these people that are coming to us ? This is a question that leads to thought ; to make Philip and all disciples think about the mystery of spiritual life and how it is nourished ; it is uttered to prove men, that is to see if they are being developed to spiritual manhood ; or, if they are still children. Philip estimates how much will be required if every one is to get a small portion ; and his friend, Andrew, finds a lad who is the happy possessor of five loaves and two fishes, but this small

supply is altogether insufficient for so many people. The estimate and the supply found are of this use, they prove the state of bankruptcy, and that the solution of the problem of supply is outside the horizon of the thoughts of men. So far this is satisfactory ; it clears the way for the manifestation of the Divine ideal and purpose, and it is for men to study, very carefully, the complex problem presented to them. It is evident that those around Christ could not understand His thoughts and words ; and more, it seems conclusive that Christ clearly saw that they could not understand what He said to them ; the issue was that the sceptics shrugged their shoulders, turned about and left Him ; and only those who were alive by faith, and had reached the assurance that Christ is the Son of the Living God, remained with Him. Perhaps at the end of this age men may now be in a position to look into the heart of this problem : it has been attacked from many sides, and there is a convergence of thought which may help men to apprehend in some measure the thoughts in the mind of Christ, which seemed unreasonable to the Jews. To advance from the side of the physical, the philosophical and the agnostic, the position may be summed up in this way ; there is the fact of physical life ; it is known by its manifold, manifested relations ; all the facts of physical life are, so to speak, organic, following order and law ; but all these manifestations are the ever changing forms of life ; the living is ever living, there is no such thing as death, because what has been named death is disintegration, or what leads to resurrection, and the issue will be the survival of life. This line of thought reaches beyond the groping stage into man's knowledge of physical life by its manifestations ; it soars into the empyrean intellectual heaven, and declares that the whole constitution of nature is to be summed up in a similar way ; man can only know related conditions ; these are ever changing ; they move in cycles and epi-cycles ; there is nothing, or no one outside, or above nature ; therefore nature is life and there is no death. It must be granted that this line of argument from the physical side is valuable ; and, as in a nutshell, men can grasp the results of science, and the conceptions of the keenest intellects of this age. But surely the issue is very disappointing ; men shudder at the spectre that meets them in the darkness ; their hearts seem to stand still, their brains are threatened with paralysis ; they feel that the icy breath of extinction is upon them, it may be Nirvana, perhaps,

it may be negation ; and yet it cannot be that, because, mystery of mysteries, behind all these there is Life.

The suggestion has now to be made that by the method of Christ men ought to be able to look at this problem of life from Christ's stand-point. The position takes this form : This Ultimate named Nature, and Life, is God, the source of all life ; Christ, as the Son of God, has inherent life in Himself, as the Arch-type of all that lives. Christ is the Gracious Life of God in Love and Self-sacrifice, and it is in sign as physical Life, and in Reality as spiritual Life, that He reveals Himself to men. Accepting this thought for guidance, whilst listening in spirit to the conversation at Capernaum, the following conceptions may be reached : Christ is Life ; it is inherent in Him, it is His being. It pleased Christ, by His Word, creative power, to cause to be made manifest all that lives ; it is His Spirit that underlies, ordains, modifies and organises all living ; therefore all that lives is, in a very marvellous sense, His Body. Apply this, as He does, in his reasoning with the Jews, and it is plain that, as a literal truth, He is Bread, the Bread of God, the Bread from heaven, the Living Bread and Bread for the living. If men do not eat this Bread they will die physically ; but if they eat this Bread, and rise to spiritual conceptions, then they will live eternally. This Bread is not wheat only ; it is all kinds of cereals and fruits, and it develops into flesh and blood, and this flesh and blood is His Flesh and Blood, it is His body. There is development in the order of thought in this way ; the cereal seed for bread covers all that is involved in the seed, and flesh and blood, as in man's body, covers all that is involved in the constitution of man ; therefore, flesh and blood are the physical signs for manhood, in Adam, and the spiritual manhood in Christ ; there is but one Life, Christ, and if men do not live in, and on, Him, they die. This may be a very hard saying, and few may be able to hear it, but there it is ; life for man is life in Christ ; development in life comes from Him, and the glorious issue is the Divine ideal, that redeemed man is consciously elevated to the extraordinary conception that he is one in union and communion with Christ. Even disciples may be conceived as murmuring against such a conception as this ; they may even feel offended that such mystical metaphysical thoughts should be introduced into practical religion ; but surely it is unreasonable to take offence at such conceptions, when they are actually embodied into the work of Christ. He has ascended



up where He was before. The Spirit has come with quickening power; the flesh in Judaism did not profit men; therefore, it is clear that the words of Christ are Spirit, and Life. These are the issues in this great struggle of manhood for Bread; on the one hand there stands the spectre of agnosticism, with the finger pointing into the awful darkness, inviting men to enter the shades of extinction; and he calls it Nirvana or some other name; there is a horrible grin upon the face of the tempter as he suggests the thought that there may be new openings somewhere out of that darkness, because as there is no death the cycle of life will come round again, and thus possibly, who knows, there may be a resurrection out of that disintegrated chaos, and with the next turn of the wheel the man may become an angel or even a Buddha. Let the names, traitor, liar, betrayer, be written across the forehead of this devil; let those who accept this invitation be branded as silly fools who have been beguiled by the evil one; they thought that their eyes were opened, that they had raised themselves to godship, that they were made wise by eating the devil's fruit. What will the awakening be? Nakedness, and the voice of judgment. Truly God is patient and long-suffering, but the end is ever the same, shame and confusion, banishment from the Eden home; the return to the world, the desert, the earth, thorns, thistles, sweat of face, travail of body, death and burial, for of the physical, the natural, it remains true, "dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." The agnostic finds his Nirvana in the Unknowable, Nature, and the ever changing relations of thoughts and conditions. The Christian finds a new vision of God, a wonderful revelation of Christ as Life, in all the fulness of living manifestations; the Holy Spirit points to the fact that nature is not physical, and that manhood is not earthly, they are spirit, and they are life, because they are the mystic words of Christ the work of the Spirit and the thoughts of God.

When such a vision of life breaks in upon the soul of man, with this union and communion in life and spirit with Christ, it is somewhat difficult to take bearings and to find exactly how the magnetic needle of the spirit is moving, so that it may be found to respond with perfect harmony to the Divine will. Christ has become so manifestly glorious in His Manhood, that it appears amazing to think that men could have been so blinded by prejudice, preconceptions and pride, as to be unable to see that the Man was so completely beyond them, that they could not, by any

measure of thought they possessed, find His measure, and place Him where He ought to be. This is the expressed, or unexpressed, feeling among the Jews during the period of the feast at Jerusalem; the crisis had come upon them, He was in the thoughts of everyone, thus their many questions, What is He? Where is he? He is a good man. He is a deceiver. How is he an ignorant peasant so learned and wise? Whither will he go that we will not be able to find Him? 'This is Christ. How can He be Christ and come out of Galilee? Why have ye not arrested Him? We were unable to do so for, "Never man spake like this Man." Ye are deceived and ignorant, the rulers and Pharisees know better. It was thus the troubled waters surged backward and forward that day in Jerusalem; the atmosphere was electric, perturbed, magnetic and dia-magnetic, it was the prelude to the storm, and the only one who knew what the commotion meant was the Lord at the centre of all the disturbance, Himself calm, peaceful, and to the people more and more an unsolvable problem. He was the magnetic pole of attraction to many, to others a power most repellent, and the sign He uses to express His conception of what He is for mankind, thirsty, feverish, unsatisfied with what is earthly, is the fountain and the stream of Living Water, free to all who will come to Him and drink. It is this believing, coming and drinking, that is of supreme importance, because the Living Water that flows from Him is the Holy Spirit, which, in every man that drinks, becomes a living fountain of blessing.

What use would the Pharisees make of Christ, so that they might be able to entrap and condemn him? They would make Him a judge, they would make it to appear that He set Himself up as greater than Moses, and the result was the incident of the woman caught in adultery. The wrangling of the Pharisees is unseemly, they were ignorant and blind with passion, and thus they would have stoned Him and put Him to death. Blindness, judicial blindness, hereditary blindness, blindness after birth and blindness before birth. What is the meaning of blindness? Why is it that men are blind? Blindness in the physical sense, means that a man deprived of sight lives in a realm of darkness, and yet the world around him may be radiant with the glory of light and all that it reveals. Why is it that even a new born babe may lack the power of vision, and thus be doomed to live and move in a world of darkness? Did the child sin in a former life against light? Did the parents sin and thus bring blindness upon their

child ? Master, solve the enigma of life for us, so that we may be able to judge rightly and declare that God is just and righteous, even though such events take place in the providence of God upon the earth. Why should men reason thus and be apparently so ready to bring the works of God before their judgment seat ? Do they really expect that in their benighted condition, encircled by the darkness, that they are in a position to discern, judge, and give a judgment upon the purpose, design, and work of God, for the salvation of mankind ? This special man is not set up as an illustration of sin and its consequences, although sin is involved in the problem ; this man, even though blind, is found here to be the very man that God requires, so that by Him the works of God may be made manifest. What profit will men receive from endless talk about the origin of evil, the transmigration of souls, and similar subjects ? Here is the blind man, bestow sight upon him, and then talk by telling men how it can be done. Life is too short and too important to waste it over such questions ; Christ had work to do and so has every man, therefore work while the day lasts for the night will come, and the time for working will be past. Christ in the world is the Light of the World. He may use means or not, as he pleases, to give men the power of vision, but if they are touched, anointed, sent by Him, and obey His voice, the result will be light and sight to the praise and glory of God. The important teaching in this story is not the miracle of giving sight to the blind, it may not even be the revelation that Christ is the Light of the World, it is the great contrast of the marvellous development of faith in a man born blind rising to the vision of the Son of God, as compared with men who possessed natural vision, but being under the curse of unbelief became so deteriorated, and degraded, that they were unable to receive spiritual vision. The Scribes and Pharisees would make Him a judge so that they might condemn Him ; here is the end of their craft and cunning, their falseness and hypocrisy, the Light from heaven has been flashed into their eyes, and poor wretches, they know not that they have brought upon themselves spiritual blindness. There is the true majesty of the judge in these words " For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and they which see might be made blind." Let men be careful, this Judge is not one to mock or to sneer at, with the foolish words " Are we blind also ? " Where there is blindness there is no sin ; but when men say that they can see what is true, and do what is right,

and yet reject truth and do what is evil, then they see not, they are blind of heart, they sit in the darkness and sin rests upon their heads. This thought of the Blessed One as Judge is a terrible vision. Is it not something serious to contemplate the thought that His very presence, as Light and Truth, is justice and judgment? Here is a poor blind man sitting in the darkness, and to him Jesus is light, sight, life and blessing; in a brief time, his spiritual vision is enlarged, he looks into the face of the Son of God and his soul is filled with worship. Here also in the same sunshine, under the same clear sky, are men who think themselves wise and far seeing, the very children of God; but they are wrong, they have taken the wrong path, they think they see, but they are judged and condemned, they have brought the judgment upon their own heads and as by an automatic action all this has taken place.

It is in these varied incidents, and out of the chaos of these conflicting opinions, that the Christ is revealed as the Son of God. To the disciples the revelation comes as a crisis; and only those who possess or are possessed by faith and love find out that to give up Christ is to give up their highest and best hopes; they cannot depart from Him, because he only has the words of life; to them He is the Christ, and there the matter must end. The illustration of the blind man is very simple; with him there is no crisis; the day breaks, the sun rises, it is light, the man looks into the face and the heart of Christ; he is perfectly satisfied with the truth revealed; Christ is the very Son of God with power; and He is adored and worshipped. What is it in the usual order of the method of Christ that follows this revelation of Christ as the Son of God? It is Christ as sacrifice for sin, that complementary thought which gives reality, vitality and perfect value to the Divine Life. In this Gospel men look round for temple and altar, priest and sacrifice, and they are not to be seen; this is not the place for sacerdotal symbols; it is where nature and spirit meet, and thus the picture presented is the sheepfold, the sheep and their pasture, and the Good Shepherd tending His flocks. But this parable of the Divine Life requires to be studied, because the homely, peaceful life of a shepherd does not suggest, upon the face of it, the conception of self-sacrifice, danger and death. The hireling shepherd loves his hire more than his sheep; his own safety more than their security; and because he is a mere hireling when thief, robber, wolf or lion appear, it is his own safety that is to him of chief importance; self first and let the flock perish if the shepherd can save his own

skin. Christ is not thus minded ; He lays down his life for His sheep ; He seeks for and finds sheep that have strayed from the fold. His mission is to bring them back, when they hear His voice ; and at last there shall be a single fold for all God's sheep, and one shepherd over them all. It is this spirit of self-sacrifice that the Father loves ; it is not in any sense compulsory but perfectly free in Christ. He has the power to lay down His life ; it is not taken from Him against His will ; and when He pleases, He will take up the broken thread and reunite it again. In all these things, as Son of God, He is perfectly free ; all this is in perfect harmony with the Father's will ; it may not coincide with the conceptions of men with their present limited perverse thoughts ; and, truly, if men were not to be saved until they could agree about how it was to be done, it is conclusive that they never would find any method upon which they would unite. Such thoughts as these ; that is as to the way of salvation, have ever caused intense divisions among men ; it is much easier to think that the way of salvation is by priests, sacrifices, altars and ceremonies, than by the self-sacrificing shepherd. The men who would call a high priest a god would be praised ; but those who would see in a shepherd the Son of God are thought to be mad. This is how matters stand ; it is useless to reason with such men, they have their own standards of what is true, right and religious ; and what differs from them is heresy, blasphemy, and all that is evil ; they are blind leaders of the blind, and since they will not receive sight, and will not be taught to see truly, they must be left alone to follow their own conceptions. What connection may be conceived as existing betwixt the parable of the Good Shepherd and His Self-Sacrifice for His flock, with the story of the home at Bethany, and the raising of Lazarus from the dead ? At first sight there does not appear to be any, and yet on reflection there is the feeling that the parable, and the sign, are correlated. In what way ? Thus, the Son of God has been revealed in power, the Shepherd has given his Life for His sheep willingly, and the issue is death. Who then is Victor, evil and death, or Christ, the Son of God ? The answer is given in the sign, of the story of the death and the rising again of Lazarus ; within three days Lazarus is raised from the grave ; Life has conquered death, and the sign of the Resurrection is a living fact in the man Lazarus. The story is, at this very point, suggestive and important ; it reveals what Christ is as Son of God, and what He does for the salvation of men ; and there follows, as the spiritual sequence,

what is stated by Christ to Martha, that He is both "the Resurrection and Life"; and that He has abolished death and made life immortal by His power. This sign is prophetic of His Own Resurrection, and of the resurrection of all who believe in Him; even the dead will live again and become immortal; and the living who believe in Him will never die. Do the faithful believe these words fully, and all that they promise and predict? No; they do not grasp or understand all that the words mean; but they do believe that Christ is the Son of God, and that is enough.

What was the result of this great miracle of the resurrection of the dead? There are a series of incidents mentioned which will repay careful consideration; they all indicate how acute the crisis had become; how very near the tragic fall of Judea was; and in what way Christ was preparing His friends and followers for His Own end. To the rulers of Israel the position was critical indeed; judging as they did by outward signs, there was, as they thought, the immediate risk of a revolution; and met in council they expressed their thoughts, thus: Our power and authority are being undermined; if there is a revolt then the Romans will step in and take away our place and nation. What is their remedy? Better that Jesus should die for the people, so that the nation might not perish. This expediency may be granted to men of this world; but it is a false and base policy for the rulers of a nation, like that of Israel; and it is to be at once utterly condemned as unrighteous in fact; and opposed to the Will of the Lord, the King of Israel. His death being determined upon, what did Jesus do? He went away for a brief period to Ephraim in the wilderness with His disciples; returned to Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover feast; and made the necessary preparations for this coming Passover, that was to fulfil all Passovers. Is it necessary to pause and think as to the experiences, and the thoughts of Christ at this time; for to Him also the days and hours were very critical? The knowledge that the time of the passion, the arrest, trial, and death, were very near pressed upon Him; and that this tension was very great may be inferred from the utterance that came from His heart, when the Greeks, who had come to this feast, expressed their wish to speak with Him. The signs that He sees pass before Him day by day prove that the time appointed is very near; but, when the Gentiles are come, and desire to see and speak with Him, this is the hour at last when the glory shall pass

from Israel, and the light of grace and truth be given to the Gentiles. What is the meaning of the expression "Son of Man," in this place; and, in what sense is Christ to be glorified? To the Jews He had been revealed as the Son of God; and they ought, with the history that lay behind them, to have been ready to acknowledge Him as their King. The expression the "Son of Man," so often found in the Book of Ezekiel, is here taken up; already the Jews have sinned deliberately, and judicially they are rejected by God; therefore, the Son turns away from those who have rejected Him, and He is become the Son of Man, the Brother of all men, in all nations, who will receive Him by faith, and exalt and glorify His Name upon the earth. Judaism was now dead; but there remained the seed, the corn of wheat, death, the new risen life, and these strangers, whether they knew it or not, were as the seed bed of the Gospel for the West, where it would live and bring forth much fruit. To love life for selfish ends is to lose life; to use life and lose it for others is to gain eternal life. To serve and follow may seem to lower a man's position, but this is the way to the highest service in the King's presence, and to receive honour from the Father. But what is the meaning of such a vision as this of self-sacrifice and service? It is like a sea of trouble; it is where men cannot utter what they think; it is the cry of the child as the waters go over his head and there is nothing that can be grasped; Father, save; Father, let Thy Name be glorified. It was not Jesus only who uttered these words; are they not to be found in the hearts of psalmists, prophets, apostles, martyrs, saints, and all those who suffer. What is the Father's response to all such cries from the sons of men? "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Men listen to this Voice, but they know not whether it is thunder or an angel's voice; it may be the voice of judgment upon men because of sin, or it may be of mercy and forgiveness through Christ and the Cross. The voice is there, it may be heard, and men may interpret the meaning, but let men be very careful, the time is very short, the sun is almost set, the light will be gone, and the darkness of night will surely follow. To reject Christ is to lose the light, and this means walking in the darkness not knowing what the end will be.

"These things spake Jesus, and departed and did hide Himself from them." In other words the public ministry is at an end; the Son of Man is gone from those who have rejected Him;

but His words remain, they live, they will judge rejectors, and they will continue to reveal the life everlasting to men. The hour was come for departure, the Passover was near, the supper was prepared, and the loved ones were met together for the last time in the presence of their beloved Teacher. It was the feast of love, the last supper, and the last opportunity to give the lessons of patience and of love He longed to convey to them. Having loved He loved to the very end ; He was in the midst of those He loved, and those who loved Him ; yet there was something wrong ; the love was not perfect ; even in this small company the devil was to be found possessing a soul, and there were those who had not profited, as they might have done, from the teaching of the Master. What were the lessons the disciples required and that Christ was prepared to give them ? In this hour Christ was in some special sense clairvoyant ; He divined to the full the glorious kingdom of which He was the Founder and King ; He knew that His beginning was God, and His end God. These are marvellous symbols of thought ; they are illimitable ; in His hands all things ; God at the beginning and the end, and all between, Christ the Son of God. There is a devil present in the covetous soul of Judas. Covetousness is idolatry, the quintessence of selfishness, and this evil spirit was dominant in this man. What ailed the other disciples ? They were ambitious, they loved pre-eminence ; they aspired after first places, promotion, lordship, in fact they were earthly not heavenly ; their conceptions were limited to the visible, the tangible, and the evanescent ; they sought after moral manhood as an ideal ; they did not know that their ideal had long been rejected and cast out ; the earth was still upon their feet and they required to be washed in the laver of humility, so that with the eyes of love they might see truly. This is the parable or the sign of the washing of feet by the Lord and Master. This story is not for the worldling ; it is for those who love, and only those who love can understand its significance. It was not John who remonstrated at this action of the Lord and Master ; he would feel that it meant something very serious ; it was Peter that was instinctively horrified at the thought that the Lord, the Son of God, should demean Himself to take the lowly servant's place and wash his feet ; it was like an outrage against heaven that the Highest should take the lowest place and be permitted to do this thing. The feelings of the impetuous Peter do him credit ; for truly



this condescension passes comprehension ; it is enough to make men sit dumb and inquire in their hearts, what can this mean ? The sign is full of meaning ; the Lord and Master has washed His disciples' feet ; they are to follow His example ; they are to serve one another in the lowliest of service ; and they are to remember that the servant and the messenger are not greater but less than their Master. If the disciples of Christ will do these things, happy are they, but if they only know them, misinterpret and misapply them, then they are wrong, they are not following the Master's example, and they cannot be happy or become perfect in love. The suggested sign here, in the case of Judas Iscariot, is that even example, patience, and washing may not be enough for some men ; and that when the demon of covetousness possesses the heart of a man even Divine love will fail to soften that gold which is the idol in the heart. The Lord of Life took bread, His own Body, and dipped it in the cup of wine, His own Blood, the symbols of His love and death, and gave the sop to Judas. Even this did not move his heart to repentance, he went out into the dark night, a soul lost in the darkness. From the very heart of God he had received a token, a proof of love, and he basely went and sold, betrayed, his Master for thirty pieces of silver. It is true that love will cast out evil and become regnant ; but who can follow the lost soul that will not love into the outer darkness ? This is a vision not for discussion but for consideration ; it is not for intellectual criticism, but rather a warning voice so that men may fear such a doom and flee for help to Christ, the Saviour.

Is there not something remarkable in the relief that Jesus seemed to feel at the departure of Judas ? Is it the casting out of the evil one from the company that is as a refreshing draught for His Spirit ? Is it that the way is now clear and the revelation of the glory of God in the salvation of mankind is at hand ? It is as if the Spirit of Glory and of God had come upon Him ; He cannot restrain Himself any longer ; He is glorified ; God is glorified ; in Himself He is glorified ; and the vision is very near and very glorious. How is this glory to be made manifest ? It is by love ; this is his new commandment to men, to love as He has loved ; the true mark of discipleship is love, and it is by this sign that the world will know the disciples of Christ. He loved, taught men to love, gave them a commandment of love, as their one chief law of life, and then His great mission being fulfilled

told the disciples that He was going away from them, and going so far away that they would not be able to follow or find Him. It is by this going away and this law of love that He would raise their thoughts and prepare them for the future ; for the Father's house ; for the necessary preparation there ; for the important revelation that He is the Way to the Father ; the Truth they are to cherish in their minds ; and the Life to dwell in their hearts. All these thoughts are too mystical for Philip like men ; they cannot make anything of such abstract words ; what they desire is to know or see the Father ; to think upon heaven as a place, and the Father in heaven as a Person. This frailty of men lies very close to their hearts, they cannot love the abstract, and what is the Father but an abstract term as illumined a little by the human father. It is not thus that Christian disciples are taught to think of their Father in heaven ; the Ideal is Christ, the Father is in Him, He is in the Father, they are as One, and it is the Father in Him that is merciful, patient, kind, good, doing all good works. This is not a matter to be understood by logic, it is faith as guided by love, and the right way to realise this truth is by faith and trust in prayer, and by obedience in love.

What will the result be if there is this faith in Christ as Father, or as like the Father, or One with the Father, and if there is prayer, spiritual communion and obedience in the spirit of love ? The result will be the Comforter, as the Spirit of Truth ; an invisible Power, not seen or known by worldly men, and that Spirit will be dwelling in the midst of disciples, and indwelling in those who love and obey Christ. But how will Christ manifest Himself to His disciples by the Spirit, and refrain from making Himself known to men of this world ? This puzzle is easily solved, because the golden gates of heaven turn upon hinges electrified by love ; if there is love in the heart of a man there will be response to that electric love in heaven ; love will answer love, evil will be shut out, and thus the beatific vision will be heaven in the heart. This heaven in the heart is a great mystery and a great truth ; and Christ says that such a heart, full of love, will receive Father, Son, and Spirit, but this is not so very mysterious after all, it is the vision of creation in another form ; it is the re-creation vision become radiant in glory ; it is Christ in the heart as love, the image and likeness of God. These thoughts were uttered by Christ before He parted from His disciples ; He knew that they did not understand what He said, and He did not blame them

because they did not ; it is His Holy Spirit that dwells in love, that will teach what these words mean, and thus bring to remembrance what He said on the eve of His departure. His law is love ; to obey in the spirit of love is heaven ; in heaven the Spirit reigns in love revealing truth ; truth is radiant light, the glory of heaven ; where love, truth, grace and the Spirit dwell, the result is peace, the peace of Christ ; in short the love of Christ is heaven ; heaven is love, and all who love like Christ are in heaven. Before Christ went away He told His disciples these things ; they have been enswathed as a seed of love in verses of Scripture since that day, and what He said is now coming to pass in a special manner. Is it not very wonderful that His words are being fulfilled ; that in these days the vision of Christ is becoming the vision of men ; they must actually see with their own eyes, hear with their own ears, and understand with their own hearts the sayings of Christ, and it will soon be not a matter of belief, but of scientific fact, not to be questioned by reasonable men. There followed after these words a silence ; that other prince, the evil one, was coming ; he will rule and reign in the midst of men, but where love reigns there is Christ and that evil one cannot enter this heaven of love and haven of peace. It is enough, " Arise, let us go hence."

What can the meaning be of this abrupt ending of the revelation, of the going of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit ? It is the necessary break betwixt that great change which is equivalent to a new creation, in other words the ideal has to take a concrete form ; the Spirit in all wisdom has to be embodied in a symbol, or in mankind, and the symbol is to be found in the parable of the vine. It is not necessary to explain how fitly the symbol illustrates the spiritual truth ; the Lord Christ is the Vine with its life, form, branches and fruit, and all His disciples are fruit-bearing branches. It is love that cleanses, it is love that is the life-blood of the tree, it is love that produces fruit, it is the fruit love that proves discipleship, it is by keeping the law of love that there is fruitfulness, and apart from love the Christ life is not there, the branch is diseased, and unfit to live upon the Life in the Vine. Very mystical and most beautiful, but the real value in this parable is its perfect consistency with all that men can know of natural things ; what is revealed here is not anything strange, or unlikely ; it is the heavenly vine in its history of development ; and there it stands before men as a perfect scientific conception. Why did Christ

reveal these thoughts to His disciples? Why, indeed? For the very strangest of reasons which Christians as a rule have failed to discover; it was that they might have joy, that joy might be their abiding life in heart and home, and that life might be jubilant with joy. But this is not the Christian religion as men have known and experienced it in this world. Of course not. How could it be? How stupid and unscientific men are, how can they expect to move about among bramble bushes and not be torn by the thorns, or how can they expect to find clusters of grapes hanging upon the thorn bush, or the thistle? This is the law of the Divine Vine and its fruit; the life-blood is love, Divine Love; the order of the structure is built out of love, the whole organised structure is an organism of love, it is vitalised by love that leaps with joy, therefore this law must reign supreme in the vine, and in every branch, love, even as Christ loved. Is it not evident that the vine and its produce are almost unknown? Where are the people whose souls are ruled by love? Where are the people to be found who are ready to lay down their lives in self-sacrifice for others? Alas! Alas! the ideal is altogether beyond men, they are not able to conform to this Divine, heavenly law of love, and they blame the vine, not themselves, even though they know that they have not lived according to the order, the law, the condition, by which the divine fruit of love is to be made manifest. The condition of friendship, of communion with Christ, is obedience in love, He would raise His servants, unfit to be His slaves, to this high position to converse with Himself about these things, and in His Grace He has told us all the things He heard from the Father. Here let men pause and consider their true position in the sight of Christ. Men do not choose Christ, He chooses them. He places them in their place and order. He sends them forth to be fruitful, and yet they are not separated from Him, because every prayer for help will be heard, and what love asks from the Father of Love in the Name of Love will be given; only let this law never be forgotten, that His supreme and all-embracing law in this realm is mutual love. It is not difficult to understand that this law of love, and self-sacrifice will find no responsive law of love in worldly men and worldly hearts. It is just here that the struggle begins in the heart and among men; this is where the prince of evil finds his opportunity, and it is his work to stir up strife, hatred and enmity so that by these the kingdom of Love and Light may be destroyed. Christ knew all these things well. He knew the

testimony of history in this matter ; psalmists had experienced the fact that without real cause evil hated good ; His own experiences at that time were confirming this truth, and as in the past and present, so in the future, the same struggle would go on among men, until the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, would guide men into the way of truth and righteousness, and there would come that marvellous revelation of Truth, that the Father, Son and Spirit are one in mystic union and communion. There must be separation for a little while ; a time of travail and sorrow ; a conception, a birth and joy ; these are the parables of life that require to be understood, they are the ever changing forms which men see and do not understand. The supreme truth to grasp under all conditions of life is this : Christ came from God with the message of Divine Love to men ; Christ came from the Father, to tell His children that they were not forgotten and unloved ; and Christ having fulfilled, proved, this mission of love, to the full, He was returning to the Father of Love with the news that His children had heard His voice and believed in the truth of this love now made manifest upon the earth. This is the truth that Christians hold and firmly believe ; it was instilled into the hearts of the disciples upon that night of Communion ; it has been the inheritance of all the generations of the saints since that time ; let men reason as they please about Christ and His work ; this is the confession of all true Christians, " We believe that Thou camest forth from God." " Do ye now believe ? " Then the hour of darkness and scattering is come, the Christ must be left alone ; yet not lost in the loneliness for the Father is with Him ; in Christ men will find peace ; the world will be full of trouble ; but be cheerful, Christ has overcome the world. The prayer that follows this conversation is intercessory ; it is from the Son to the Father, in the Spirit, at this crisis, this hour, that is to bring salvation to mankind. It is not an hour of failure and disaster but of victory and glory, because the work of Divine Love is finished, God is glorified in this work, and Christ will return to the Father and to the eternal glory. His prayer is for the disciples, that they may be kept safe and sanctified through the truth ; that they might be messengers of grace and truth to the world ; and that those who receive their words may be kept in the truth so that the Divine ideal of unity might be realised as a testimony to the world. His glory is their inheritance, given to them so that they may become perfect in the Divine unity, and that they may

be with Him and behold His glory. The world had lost the knowledge of the righteousness of God ; this Christ restored to men ; at last they knew that Christ had come to make known, and to fully declare, the love of God for sinful men. The love of the Father to the Son has been made manifest ; men have received this love into their hearts ; this love is Christ in men as the new regenerate life ; and it is by the life of love, of likeness to Christ, they prove to the world that they are the disciples of Christ.

What is the meaning of that portion of the Gospel which is occupied with the garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal, the arrest, the drawn sword of Peter, the rebuke from Christ, the denial of Peter, the enquiry, the trial before the Sanhedrim, the delivery to the Romans, the wavering Pilate as the unjust judge, the sentence, the crucifixion, the death, burial and resurrection from the dead ? Are all these to be limited to Christ as He appeared in Judea long ago ; or are they in some sense, not easily defined, to be applied to those who prepared the way of Christ before His coming ? Christ fulfilled, filled to the full, all that His messengers predicted, and suffered ; He is the Microcosm of that great Macrocosm that took many centuries for its development. In epitome it is all summed up in Himself ; as Man He is the Son of Man ; and as one of the favoured children of Abraham He is the Son of God. If Christian history is taken, it is the same story enacted under new forms ; it is now the Holy Spirit that is involved in the world conditions with the Word as visible symbol ? To put the matter in another form, in the days before Christ, in the Old Testament it is God the King, Judge, and Father of His people that is rejected and put to shame ; in the New Testament it is Christ, the Son, the Saviour of the world ; and in the Christian Church and Empires it is the Holy Spirit, in the age long dispensation of the Spirit, that is despised and rejected, and the Word of God dishonoured and put to shame before the world. It has to be remembered that this is in the order of development in the Gospel, the eleventh stage in the Kingdom of Heaven ; it is the representation of the permitted regnancy and supremacy of the powers of evil, when they are permitted, for all-wise reasons, to make manifest before the eyes of men, beneath God's heaven, upon the platform of this world, the diabolical powers which men have chosen to reign over them. This is a matter that requires careful study ; in Christ the revelation is made manifest ; it is embodied in Him ; it is made through Him the subject for historical study and

development; He is the preacher's object lesson; the poet's theme; the painter's picture; He is the good man's example and the vision of the mystic. As Truth, Grace, and Love, Christ is the highest Ideal; but, as related to the agnostic, intellectual vision of mankind, He is hated, rejected, treated with contumely; made to wear the thorny crown and to die upon the cursed tree. As already suggested, the fifth, in the natural development, is Moses and the Desert, unbelief, the worship of the golden calf and the turning back from the promised land. The same series of events in varied forms can be traced in the Judges, and in the kingdom of Israel; the end being abominable heathen worship, the rejection of God as King and Father; the Captivity, the judgments of God, and a Restoration, a Resurrection from the death in Babylon and Persia. In the age of the Spirit, named Christian, has there not been events similar in their order? At present this may not be seen clearly, but the day will come when thoughtful men will study this subject, and it may be that they will discover not the wonderful superiority of the Christian over the Jew; but the far more grievous culpability in that they have sinned, as with a high hand, against the Holy Spirit of Truth, whilst holding in their hands the Book that revealed to them, in various ways, in what forms the same spiritual evils had been committed in Israel and against the Lord Christ. It seems as if this Gospel went to the very root of all the problems of life; it would even point to the latest phases of scepticism and unbelief. What more gross than the doubts of Thomas, a disciple, when he declares that he will not believe that Christ lives unless he can see with his eyes the nail prints, touch them with his finger, and thrust his hand into that side from whence there came blood and water for his own salvation. Was there ever such unutterable folly? Why, the Lord has only to appear, speak and give the benediction of peace, when the other extreme is reached by the ecstatic cry, "My Lord and My God."

What is the remarkable event that has in it the prophetic spirit, as if there was a revelation to be made that could not be made until after all other things had been considered by the disciples? It is the dawn of a new day; the night of toil is past; the work has been disappointing to the disciples, and it would almost appear as if no blessing had rested upon their efforts. Have the skilled hands of the fishermen lost their cunning? Is there a Providence that directs the fisherman in his work,

and the preacher of the Gospel in his labours ? Is it true that a Paul may plant the seed of grace, and an Apollos give water for nourishment ; but it is God alone that gives blessing and increase ? It is even so, and the parable of the fruitless night's fishing, and the great haul at daybreak, when the net is let down on the right side of the ship at the Lord's command, is no exception to the great law in nature and in grace, that in ways men cannot explain, God gives and withholds His blessings according to His Own Divine Will in love. It is time for men to lay this thought to heart, and to try to discover this supreme, all-embracing law in the Kingdom of Heaven. The only key that will solve all enigmas and open all hearts is the golden key of love ; it is plain that all other keys are useless ; they will not fit all the intricate wards in the locked-up heart. It is Christ's love that fits all breasts and all thoughts ; it is forged with the gold of heavenly love ; thus the heart responds to it because it is made for heaven, and when the key from heaven finds the heavenly that is in the soul of man, the conditions are completely changed ; it is as if that which was dia-magnetic and filled with darkness moves round to the magnetic angle of refraction, and behold ! all is light, for God's love in heaven and love in the heart are in correspondence, and the result is light, life, and love. What is the test of true discipleship in the presence of the Master who so loved that He gave Himself for men ? The key is applied to Peter in the threefold inquiry, " Lovest thou He ? " It is Peter, the ardent professor, the representative man in the midst of the disciples, who denied his Lord three times, to whom these questions are addressed. There is no upbraiding, no reference to the past, no rebuke or warning as to the future, just the simple question, " Do you love Me ? " and the duty that springs out of love, Be a good shepherd and feed the sheep and lambs of the flock. It is such thoughts as these that arise in the mind when this fourth Gospel is considered in the light of the method of Christ, and in response to the question, What is the Kingdom of Christ, and of heaven ? It is not so very extravagant to take up the closing words of " the disciple whom Jesus loved," and add these words : " there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.—This is the fifth book in the New



Testament, and, as suggested, the question by the method of Christ takes this form : How has this Kingdom of Christ, or of Grace and Love, been made manifest among men ? If the Gospel of John reveals this thought, above all others, that the Kingdom is that of Divine Love, then the next question is, How, in what way or in what order of grace and mercy, is the Kingdom carried forward from Christ into the great realm of mankind as the means of salvation ? Scientific thinkers might be inclined to say that the repeated questions, of What ? has brought out the How ? to a large extent as revealed in the story of Christ's life. As what ? it is the revelation of Divine Love. As how ? it speaks of the method ; it is by Love. This is not the problem in Acts ; the stage of thought is advanced ; the Christ lives and reigns in heaven ; and the important matter is the Kingdom of Israel, of Messiah, or of heaven, and of that Restoration that was expected. What the disciples expected was the Divine intervention on their behalf ; the casting out of the Romans, and the restored kingdom of David with a visible glory that would surpass that of the reign of Solomon. With the coming of that kingdom they would exercise lordly authority, and they would sit on thrones judging the tribes of Israel. This is the pre-conception ; the natural survival of the type of thought that existed in the past ; these disciples had not discovered the truth that the past stages of development always ended in chaos and darkness ; and although they had been told of the near destruction of Jerusalem and the doom resting upon the Jews, they were unable to receive the truth ; it was the vision of the visible glory that they cherished, and it was this result they expected to take place. They were taught that the development would not take place at that time upon the lines they expected ; they were to be endowed with power by the coming of the Spirit, but that power is not for reigning as princes, but for service as witnesses to all parts of the earth. The all-important matter, therefore, is this coming of the Holy Spirit, and the realising of the kind of power with which they would be endowed. WHENCE this promised Holy Spirit ? This is history, and step by step the story must be traced back to Christ in heaven, on the earth, with the history of His life, the Baptism, the Birth, the Promises to Abraham, to Eden, to Creation and to God. How will the Spirit come ? Let men prepare the way by patient prayer and waiting upon God ; let the taint of sin be removed ; let the spirit of grace and love reign in the midst of

the brethren ; and then the great discovery will come that the Spirit is present as a mighty Power that can be felt ; He will rest upon men like tongues of fire to baptise and cleanse the spirit, and the result will be a brotherhood in love, all moved by the same self-sacrificing spirit ; all single-hearted, glad and joyful ; and all praising God for His manifold favours and the mercy so abundantly bestowed upon men for their salvation.

WHEN this notable event of the coming of the Holy Spirit took place, who was it that was recognised as the Power behind all manifestations ? There can be no doubt upon this point, it was the exalted Christ that had sent upon men His Spirit ; it was by His Name and Power that the lame man was healed ; it was His Spirit in Peter that enabled him to witness to the resurrection and glory of Christ ; and it was through Christ that there came the spirit of repentance, conversion, the forgiveness of sins, and peace with God. It was by Peter, as filled with the Holy Spirit, that the rulers of Israel were confronted with the terrible charge that they had crucified the Messiah, the Saviour ; that their scheming had failed ; that the Stone of Israel which they despised was in reality the Corner Stone of the nation's hopes ; and the proof of the power of the risen Christ was the man that had been healed, in His Name, standing before them, made perfectly whole from that lifelong paralysis. This was the beginning of the struggle with worldly powers ; the method of defence had taken a new form, and it was felt to be difficult to punish men for what the Sadducees wished to believe was only a superstitious belief ; then the fact that the paralysed man had been healed could not be denied, and this was like the miracles Jesus had wrought before they put Him to death. To the disciples the result was a victory ; they were elated in spirit, and praised God for all the signs and wonders done in the Name of Jesus. In this glad hour a fresh baptism of the Spirit was poured out upon them ; they were made bold in proclaiming the Gospel ; many were converted, and the Christian brotherhood became a fact ; they were as one family, and they had all things in common. This is how the Gospel of Christ ought to be manifested among men ; it is a beautiful vision of the ideal Christian society. This is the new spiritual life in men ; the life in Christ by the Spirit, and all these experiences are the gracious effects of that old water changed into new wine in earthen vessels as at first poured out among men in Cana of Galilee.

WHY did the Holy Spirit dwell in the midst of these disciples ? The reason is given in that story of the lying, deception, hypocrisy, and covetousness of Ananias and Sapphira. What the Holy Spirit requires, where He abides, is truth in the inward parts, simplicity of character, absence of all pretence, and the self-sacrificing Spirit of Christ. The one example made of the contrary spirit in Christians may well strike fear into the hearts of men, and teach them to be careful in what spirit, and for what ends, they seek to join such a brotherhood. There is One present though unseen, who reads the thoughts and purposes of men's hearts ; and thus it is a question of life and of faith in this first decision to join the brotherhood, and of death if the life is not conformable to the profession. This is another form of the story of the priests, the sons of Aaron, in offering to God what was unhallowed ; and, it is singularly like the fate of Achan who coveted the Babylonish garment and was stoned to death. At the entry to the temple, and to each dispensation of grace, there is the dread warning for men to consider in what spirit they act, and the motives by which they are guided, because they are not dealing with men, but with the Spirit of God, who is perfectly cognisant with all facts. Still, if as for a moment there is the sudden flash of the lightning and death to the evil-doer, this is not to be interpreted as the method of the Holy Spirit ; this is the one strange act of the Spirit which bespeaks Godly fear in men ; they are taught to stand in awe and sin not, and to remember that the patient Spirit of God can strike, and that the stroke is death. To the multitudes of the sick there followed a time of great blessing ; the very shadow of Peter seemed to be possessed by the Spirit with healing power, and thus all who came, who expected blessing, were blessed, and those who were brought by others, they were all healed every one. Why did the Spirit linger in the midst of the rulers of Israel when the few remaining sands were running out, and they were bringing upon themselves that judgment which lingered upon the way ? The answer is found in Gamaliel ; he could not agree with the doings of the Sanhedrim ; they were not acting wisely, judiciously, rightly ; there was manifestly a new movement on foot that he was unable to measure, and being a just, God-fearing man he uttered the voice of warning, the last sane voice, in the council, against this prosecution of innocent men, who, whether they were right or wrong, were acting as their consciences dictated. The counsel of Gamaliel is not

that of expediency, nor is it that of worldly shrewdness ; the man is true and honest ; it is by the Spirit he gives the faithful counsel that patience and watchfulness were necessary, because if the work is God's, then man cannot hinder it ; and the folly of fighting against God must be evident to all thinking men. Why did it become necessary that there should be an appointment of deacons in the Church to look after the poor, the widows, and others who required help from their brethren ? The answer is that there can be traced even thus early in the Christian society those frailties of the spirit known as partiality, preference, and it may be even jealousy. The vision of the social brotherhood, so sweet and beautiful, is already vanishing away ; there are distinctions fatal to family life ; the twelve have forgotten the lesson of the washing of feet on the night of the Supper ; they are the exalted ones to serve the word of God for the spiritual good of the flock, and let others be chosen to attend to the meaner things of alms and food. What was the result of the decision ? Not what they expected, for the Spirit was pleased to use the first of the deacons in a special manner to serve the word of God to men ; with Divine wisdom, to become a witness of truth in a wider field of thought than that thrown open to Peter, and to be the first of the disciples to follow the Master in the bloody path of martyrdom. The apostles would raise themselves above their brethren as holding the higher office of the ministry ; they are rebuked by the Spirit passing over them and choosing Stephen ; and through Stephen that young man Saul, who received, through that shed blood, the living seed of the Spirit of God. This is how the Spirit is pleased to work in the Church of Christ, the family of the faithful. He is able to warn evil doers by the lightning stroke and death, able to bless abundantly all who need to be healed and saved ; able to restrain men from rash actions ; able to make the jealousies and petty strifes in the Church the means of blessing ; and also able to supersede those who think too highly of themselves, and of their office, by raising up men more efficient for the Divine Service and glory. Here the Why ? and the How ? meet together, and the results are such as call for serious consideration.

WHAT is the method of the development of this Spiritual Kingdom of Grace and Mercy in the world ? The eighth chapter opens with the ominous words, "Saul was consenting unto his death." There was great persecution ; the disciples were scattered abroad ; Stephen was buried, and Saul made havoc of the Church by putting

men in prison. Put in the Jewish rulers instead of Saul, and Christ instead of Stephen, and there is the concrete picture of the foundation of the Christian Church ; place Saul and Stephen next in order and here is the seed of life opening up so that it may be sown broadcast throughout Judea and Samaria. Here the fact is indelibly stamped upon history ; the Church of Christ was instituted in His Own precious blood upon the Cross, by the hatred and persecution of His countrymen ; and here is confirmed that saying, "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." In what way is the gift of the Spirit to be obtained to work wonders ? Not by Simony or money value of any kind, but through knowledge of the truth in Christ as it is to be found explained in the Gospels ; and it is not for men to seek for the gift of the Spirit for selfish ends, because all this is contrary to the Spirit in the Gospel of Christ, and in direct antagonism to the Spirit of Truth. What means is the Spirit pleased to use, for the extension of the Kingdom of Grace ? Persecution by men, the preaching of the Gospel, the reading of the Word and friendly conversation, are the usual means of grace, and they are efficient in the usual ministrations in the Church of Christ. But, when it pleases the Spirit so to act, He strikes down the persecutor on the pathway of evil ; teaches him by a voice, by blindness, and other signs, that he is doing wrong ; changes his heart by a conversion, as if force was the impelling power, and thus changes the persecutor into a devoted servant of Christ, and a true apostle of the Cross. The ministration of the Spirit is a means of grace at the bedside of the sick by restoring them to health ; and, as many know, the good works of kindly Christian women reveal a doorway of true Christian helpfulness, and the blessed effects are for women-kind as if they were raised out of the dead past into a vital union with their Lord by the gracious work of the Spirit. If men would really know what the Kingdom of Grace is, and how it has been extended throughout the earth in the past, then the practical way to discover the real results is by following the history that this key provides for their guidance ; not in conclaves or synods, congresses or great congregations, but by the voice of God, as heard in the way, when hurrying headlong in evil ways ; by Gospel preaching, by conversations on the way, at the bedside of the sick, and in Dorcas meetings. These, of course, are but examples of the way the Spirit is pleased to work among men ; and this may be affirmed as a truth not to be questioned, that the Spirit is absolutely free

in all His works, and that anyone found to be so foolish as to think that the Spirit is limited to their institutions, and to their administrations, are spiritually blind, and have not been awakened to the intensity and extensity, height and depth of the all embracing work of the Holy Spirit.

How has the Spirit been pleased to enlarge the Kingdom of Grace, as from Judaism to Christianity, as from Jew to Gentile, and as from Christian to heathen? The usual supposition is that the Jew seeks the Gentile, and the Christian the heathen, and that it is out of the goodness and kindness in their hearts that all new enterprises are begun. Is this a true version of the story, or is it a biassed conception of Jew and Christian, in which there may be no small amount of self-congratulation and even self-deception? It would not be so very strange if this cherished belief were somewhat rudely upset, and if the result of enquiry tended to prove that this work is not from man, or of man, but is really and truly the work of the Spirit, as bringing about the extension of Christ's Kingdom on the earth. In the story of Cornelius, the Roman centurion, there may be found the typical extension of the Kingdom from Jew to Gentile, the opening of the door of mercy to the West, and the breaking down of those partitions which separated Jew and Gentile. The Spirit is pleased to begin with the devout God-fearing soldier, teaching him by a vision what he should do and the soldier being prepared, he immediately obeyed. When the time came to deal with the Jew apostle, a single vision was not enough for him, it had to be repeated three times, and explanations given, before he could understand what he was required to do; he had even to be encouraged to take the step so that his doubts might be removed. It is the preaching or teaching of the Gospel in its fulness that is the means of grace; the medium is the Word, and by it the Light, Life and Love of heaven illumines, vivifies, and glorifies the soul in Divine light; the Spirit comes upon those who hear and believe, and this is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The fact speaks for itself, no reasonable man would reject this evidence, the Spirit of God gives gifts to men as He pleases, therefore let men hold their peace, glorify God, and be thankful that this great truth has been revealed, that to Jew, Christian and heathen, God has granted repentance unto life. This is the typical illustration of how the Spirit is pleased to carry on and extend the Kingdom of Grace in the world, but there are also other avenues of different kinds which are opened up in other

directions, the rule being that those who are converted to God, assemble together, form a family of God, or a Church of Christ, and it was in this way that they received the name of Christians. There is another little touch to be added to this record ; it takes the form of Christian unity as seen in Christian giving. When the disciples in Antioch were made aware that their brethren in Judea were suffering they sent relief according to their ability, and this is how Christianity takes a practical form, thus proving that it is the means of grace for salvation, and a bond of brotherhood capable of the widest extension.

In this section it would seem as if the question to be asked and answered takes this form : Who is the man chosen of the Spirit to carry on the mission of the Spirit among the Gentiles ? In thought men are taken back to Judea, King Herod is presented and instantly rejected ; the Edomite is a persecutor, he killed James with the sword, and seeing that this pleased the Jews he took steps to arrest Peter, with intent to put him to death after Easter. The Lord delivered Peter by His angel ; Herod was exalted as a demi-god, the finger of the Lord by the angel of death touched him, and he was dead and dishonoured. The man chosen by the Spirit is Saul, or Paul, and the moment of the special baptism of this servant of Christ by the Holy Spirit was when in the presence of Sergius Paulus, Saul condemned Elymas, and there fell upon the sorcerer mist, darkness, and blindness, the judgment of God because of his enmity to righteousness. Upon the sorcerer blindness, and upon Paul, the Holy Spirit as a special endowment. The contrast is very striking, upon the one there falls the curse of the serpent and evil, darkness, night, and the fall from manhood ; upon the other spiritual life, light, and power, and though men knew it not, the Kingdom of Grace had, so to speak, changed its centre ; the glory of the Lord had left Jerusalem, the Jewish disciples were left behind, the river of life had been directed in its course to the West, and Paul was the instrument the Spirit was pleased to use for this great work. The work of Paul in Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe confirms this conception ; he was persecuted almost to death, he founded and confirmed churches, he exhorted believers to be faithful and courageous, and amidst the brethren in Antioch, when this mission was ended, he told them that the doorway of the Divine life by faith in Christ was open to the Gentile world. This is how the Spirit works by the man who was thus specially endowed to become the apostle of the Gentiles.

The form of question for this section is not easily found ; the word whereunto has been used already, and it may also be found useful in this place. WHEREUNTO will this movement develop, and how is it to be reconciled with Judaism ? As will be observed, the Jerusalem type of Christianity is enswathed in Judaism ; the Gentile type is spiritually free ; the one cannot break the fetters of the past and get rid of circumcision, priest, sacrifice, and ceremony, and the other, having been born free, will not recognise any obligation to enter the Church of Christ by the door, the very narrow door of Judaism. It was around these points that there was much discussion, dissension, and disputing ; and the Judaisers went so far as to say that circumcision and Mosaism were necessary for salvation. This matter having been fully discussed in Jerusalem, and ample proof having been given that the Holy Spirit takes no notice of such distinctions, as proved by Cornelius and others, but that the real issue is the purification of the heart by faith, it was resolved that the Gentiles be left free from the yoke of Mosaism, and that Jews who wish to continue their own forms of religion be permitted to do so in their synagogues. The point for consideration here is not the wisdom, expediency, or the practical issue of the discussion ; it seems rather to take this form : How are Christians fettered by sacerdotalism and ceremonialism to live in peace with Christians who are free in spirit and cannot bear such fetters ? The reply being : Let the children wear their fetters until they feel their need of emancipation by Christ and His Spirit, and let freemen not be boastful about their freedom, but patient and considerate with those who differ from them in their conceptions of religion. It will be observed here that the atmosphere these disciples breathe is not that of the Gospel of John, and of the Upper Room—that of Love ; the supreme law of the children of God is not remembered, and already law and grace, works and faith, are symbols of warfare and strife in the Christian Church. What seems to be incongruous beyond measure is this : that the children of the same heavenly Father, redeemed by the same blessed Saviour, and recipients of the same Holy Spirit, should be so foolish as to strive about a matter that is entirely beyond their reach, and over which they have no control whatever. For churchmen to say, or seem to say : We claim the Holy Spirit because we are the visible church on earth ; and for freemen to say : We know we have the Spirit because we are free, is utterly



out of place ; surely both parties are equally foolish and ignorant ; they are self-asserting instead of being self-condemned ; as if any church or party were good enough, or had a right to the Spirit, because of worth or position. This is a very serious matter : if it is the great truth of the Christian religion that the Holy Spirit dwells in the realm of love and peace, and cannot endure strife and hatred ; then what is the value of the claims made, when they are asserted in the very spirit that is in set antagonism to the Holy Spirit ? This becomes all the more serious when it is remembered that this is the seventh section, where, in a special sense, the Lord and Master over all Christians may be conceived to be in the midst of the brethren. Christians may be conceived as being too ready to throw the stone at the Jew, and to praise themselves for what they would do if the Lord came to them. Are they self-deceived and blind to the real facts of this Christian dispensation ? If brethren act in such a way toward their brethren what would they do to the Brother of all if He appeared in the midst as He did in Judea ? Let thoughtful men consider this matter, and ask whether it is not putting Christ to shame, and crucifying Him afresh ? May not, nay, must not such sins, and such a spirit be, in a very grave sense, a sin against the Holy Spirit ? Whereunto would such a spirit lead or drive men ? How do such manifestations of the spirit of evil agree with the Spirit of Christ ?

WHITHER was Paul led by the Holy Spirit after this settlement of the questions of Mosaism and Christianity, law and grace, works and faith ? The real issue may not be seen upon the surface of these discussions and their details, but the outstanding fact for all generations is this, that Christ and His Kingdom of Grace is regnant and triumphant, and that Mosaism and the past are left behind in the race of life. Is not this the meaning of the pathway of Paul westward ; he was not permitted to go to Asia ; he was not suffered to go to Bithynia, and by a vision his way was directed by the Spirit to Phillipi in Macedonia, to a Roman colony. The whither, therefore, is the Roman Empire ; the fellowship of the saints who worship God in the spirit ; the casting out of the evil spirit of divination and soothsaying that infested the Roman Empire ; the struggle for supremacy ; the deliverance in the Name of Christ ; the persecution and stripes ; the prison and the dark night ; the voices of praise in the dungeons ; the earthquake ; the great revolution ; conversion and Christian

kindliness ; and the end freedom as Roman citizens. This is the vision of the conquest of the Roman Empire by Christ in a way that the heart of man would never conceive. It is the germ seed of the work of centuries, and those who followed Paul and Silas were filling up this first sketch, doing the same work in the great empire that Paul had done in the colony at Phillipi. But here there is a call to pause and consider whether this new movement to the West is a continuation only of the story from Jerusalem, or if it is a new order, and a new division, into which this record has carried men ? Upon the surface it seems to be only the story continued, but there are tokens of differences, and it is well that they should be considered. The question Whither ? In the method of Christ, points to an issue that is to be studied ; here it is the place and man that are prominent, and the man and place point forward to great developments in the future. In other words, it is necessary to fall back upon the order of study in Genesis, and see if that will indicate what the special line of thought here may be. It will be remembered that the first series of six generations ends in Terah and Abraham ; and the second series of six in Isaac and the land promised to Abraham ; and the question raised here is this : Is there a similar development in the Book of the Acts ? It will be remembered that in the sixth section of this book there are introduced to notice four men ; and, it was suggested, that in some sense these men were types. If this idea is followed out a little further, in the light of the order in Genesis, then very profitable guidance may be obtained. These men are types of men and of manhood ; and, be it observed, it is in the sixth section or cycle of development that the new manhood is to be found. The first man is Herod the Edomite, the demi-god for men to praise ; he is not a man, his end is death and corruption. The second man is James, and his end is death by the sword, with all that this signifies. The third man is Peter in the prison, preserved and delivered by the angel, who escaped to Cesarea, with all that may be understood by his flight and residence in that place. The fourth is Paul on his journey at Cyprus, the conflict with Elymas, the sorcerer, and that special gift of the Holy Spirit by which he was endowed for his work. This is the man chosen by God, and this is where a break occurs which requires special consideration.

As suggested, there is at this point the beginning of a new series ; the natural order is at an end, and the spiritual series begins.

Taking the order of the questions of the method of Christ; the reply to the Whence? would apply to the Christian religion, as spiritual, and as rising above Judaism and ceremonialism; the reply is from Jerusalem and from that council meeting where the way of salvation was declared to be by the purification of the heart by faith, and not by Mosaism and its ceremonies and law. This is the whence? The next stage is When? And the eyes are turned to Paul and Silas, their journey to Phillipi, and the taking possession of that city for Christ. Why did this movement take place as guided by the Holy Spirit? It was to the Jews specially to teach them that the Scriptures taught that "Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ." It was to lead men to understand that in the midst of all tumults and upheavals in the world there is another King, greater than Cæsar, even Jesus. It was to lead thoughtful men and women to study the Scriptures for themselves so that they might spiritually discern the truth as it is in Christ. It was to testify to the wise men who worshipped, they knew not what, the Unknown and the Unknowable, that they were seeking for wisdom in the wrong direction, that they were really ignorant; that the light of truth was not in Greece, but in the Man who is Saviour and Judge of men. It was to bring home to the Jews the fact that the hour for decision had arrived, and that if they continued to oppose Christ and blaspheme His Name, then they were blood-guilty and their day of mercy would be past. It was to encourage the servants of Christ in their work in the midst of their labour and persecutions, and to bring the matter home to rulers that all this opposition of wicked men to the Gospel was not because of wrong-doing, or of lewdness, but of words, names, religious forms, and thus not fit matters to be brought before judges whose duty it is to judge in temporal and secular moral affairs. What is the one important subject to be studied and understood by men in this spiritual order of thought? It is not vows and shorn heads, neither is it the keeping of feasts or fasts; it is receiving instruction in the ways of Christ, the Lord; the passing away from all that was before Christ's advent and coming to realise the truth that the Holy Spirit is indeed come, and that the true baptism is that of the Spirit. What was the Jewish conception upon this important subject? It is illustrated by the story of Sceva the Jewish priest and exorcist; he would us

the Name of the Lord Jesus as a power to exorcise evil spirits ; he found that the evil spirit knew both Jesus and Paul, but the sham pretender Sceva was powerless in the hands of evil spiritual powers ; he fled for his life ; the fact being made manifest that evil spirits are more powerful than evil deceitful men. Spiritual power is not to be found in exorcism, magic, or the black arts ; all such perversions of the Spirit are to be condemned ; the fit place for them is the fire so that they may be utterly destroyed. There is, however, another spirit more powerful than that of Jewish exorcism or the black arts, and it is to be found in guilds and trades ; in selfishness, love of gain, and the desire for wealth. This is fully illustrated in the story of Demetrius, the silversmith, and his fellow craftsmen, the makers of idols for the shrine of Diana of Ephesus. This truth at least survives, as discerned by the town clerk. Christians do not commit sacrilege ; they are not blasphemers against gods or goddesses ; they preach the Gospel of Christ, and it is the Spirit that convicts of sin and reveals the way of salvation. There is nothing unlawful here even if the idol-makers do lose their trade and their wealth ; far better law-abiding Christian citizens with law than the howling mob, strife, and rioting. How is this vision of the Spirit's work in Paul to operate and end ? In the abundant preaching of the Gospel ; in the recovery to life of the dead ; in meetings and farewells ; in faithful warnings and touching painful partings ; in long voyages and in ominous forebodings ; in signs of binding, arrest, and imprisonment ; in weeping friends and breaking hearts ; in persuasion to stay and determination to go ; in the spirit of self-sacrifice that is ready to be bound and to die for Christ, and in resignation to the Will of God. The vision is Jerusalem and what Jerusalem means to prophets, Christ, and saints ; and in all this Paul is treading in the footsteps of his Lord and Saviour, only not knowing what the result will be of this journey which in his spirit he is constrained to make to Jerusalem. Who is this man, this troubler of Israel, that once more breaks the peace of the ancient city ? He is the Lord's last messenger to the Jewish people, to the priests, and to the Sanhedrim, and it is to be feared that to them the years had not brought wisdom. Ananias still lives and his lawless spirit has not improved with age, as may be seen by his insolent command to smite the prisoner that stood before him on the mouth. This outrage was keenly felt by Paul, and thus the sharp retort that he would be smitten by God.

because of his lawlessness whilst sitting on the judgment seat. Is this the word of doom on Ananias and Jerusalem? Has it come to this: that honour, dignity, law, and justice, are not to be found in this court where the King of Heaven and the Lord of the whole earth is supposed to preside? It is even so; the party spirit has prevailed, Pharisee and Sadducee are deadly enemies; the apple of discord is thrown in the midst, these rulers are demons, not men; and thus Paul has to be rescued from before the judgment seat of Israel by the legions of Rome. WHEREUNTO does all this strife tend? Paul has testified in Jerusalem before the rulers of his nation, the next movement must be to Rome so that there also he may bear witness of Christ, his Lord. Alas! for the Jews and their country, what can befall a people where there is neither justice nor judgment; where the party spirit has brought about anarchy, and where conspiracy and murder are favoured to gain personal or political ends. Chaos and darkness have fallen upon Judea and Jerusalem, and the day of judgment is at hand; the flickering lamp is ready to be extinguished, for the Jews have filled the cup of wrath to the brim. They rejected and put to death their Messiah, the Son of God, they stoned Stephen to death, and they would destroy the man chosen by the Holy Spirit to carry the Divine light of grace and mercy to the Gentiles. The sacred fire is extinguished upon the Altar, and the hearth is left cold and dead. They would not receive Christ nor His Spirit, and the end is desolation and destruction. WHETHER, and in what manner, will this Kingdom of Grace, and of the Holy Spirit, reach Rome, and there become the power for Salvation to Gentile nations? The way is long and the vision is for many days. It is not as Paul desired, and as men would suppose, in freedom and without restraint, but under the care of soldiers, with reasonable freedom of action, appearing before corrupt governors who accepted bribes, time-serving rulers who governed by the law of expediency, and kings in their pomp and magnificence. It is through the appeal unto Cæsar that the way to Rome is opened, and the voyage is that of storm, danger and shipwreck. The end is Rome, the hired house, the soldier guard and companion, the preaching of the gospel, and teaching the things that concern Christ and His Kingdom. The vision is a strange one. Is it something like the story of the Empire of the West and of the Church in its history? Paul was not free; his constant companion was a Roman soldier. Has

the Church been free or has it been in bonds to the power of Rome, that Civil Order, within which it has been kept ? These are spiritual problems worthy of careful consideration, the book and its story are ended, and men look for the Kingdom of God, they wait for the King, the Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, because according to His Own method He has taught them to look for one like Himself, or Himself, at the end of every sixth series ; thus men are even now looking for the Spiritual Man, the Son of God.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.—The Acts of the Apostles, or the revealed method of the work of the Holy Spirit, must be felt to be a communication to men of the very highest importance. It is quite true and never to be forgotten that all the sacred Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Spirit, but this is a special spiritual revelation, when men are awakened to the fact that in the Acts they are privileged by Divine Grace in the light of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, to pass within the veil of outward forms and signs, and there to see the Holy Spirit possessing, influencing, guiding and directing men in the extension of Christ's Kingdom. In the expressive thought of the Gospels, the death of Christ on the cross rent the veil of the temple from top to bottom, and thus the way into the holiest place was thrown open for men, that they might enter in and perceive the glory of God as traceable in the work of the Spirit. What seems to be suggested for consideration takes this form : in Christ's words, His disciples have become His friends and the time has arrived when they shall not be treated any longer as children. The great secret hid in the Gospels is Christ as found in the Acts. In the Gospel of Matthew, there is concentrated all the past work of the Holy Spirit, and it is revealed in Jesus Christ, of the Seed of Abraham by faith in God. The second Gospel is the manifestation of the Divine Life in the Son of God, the Hope of Mankind. The third Gospel makes known the Spirit as permeating all men and nations, as in fact incarnating the Spirit in mankind. The fourth Gospel reveals what the Kingdom of the Spirit of God and of Grace is, and in what atmosphere it can live and prosper ; and all these revelations are incarnate in Christ, as the Man, Sign, Son of God, and Saviour, The veil that shrouds the Man is rent in twain, and if men are now spiritual, and able to see what is spiritual, then they will perceive that this Spirit of Pentecost is not another Spirit different from the Spirit incarnate in Christ, but the very same Spirit, even the Spirit of God. As children of God men required this form of

education ; it was ready to break through the veil in Christ in the Upper Room ; but the disciples were children still, and thus unable to receive this baptism of the Spirit. The symbolism is very true and beautiful ; let men think upon this matter, and they will see another meaning to that death on the Cross, and to the forty days after the resurrection before the Ascension into Glory. The disciples actually required that death on the Cross that they might be able to burst the bonds of what is carnal ; it was a death and a birth, for it was the death of the visible and the birth of the spiritual. Were the disciples even then prepared to receive the spiritual ? In sign, yes ; in spiritual reality, no. This was the birth, not manhood, and that forty days' period represents the age now near an end, when the disciples will at last be able to enter into true spiritual correspondence with their Lord and Master. What then was the true position of the disciples, and of Paul ? were they fully cognisant of the work in which they were the actors ? By no means, they were sufficiently educated in things spiritual to be used by the Spirit, with their own assent, consent, and desire, to further the Kingdom of Christ, but they were only in the intellectual stage of development, they were seeking after, if haply they might find the Kingdom of Grace, and of God. If due weight is given to this conception, then, it would seem that a new light is thrown upon the Gospels and the Acts ; what men will find in these is not a revelation mechanically inspired ; not a revelation understood ; but the Holy Spirit working by Christ, and by the apostles, to reveal to men what they were then able to receive ; and yet what had in it Divine far-reaching significance in connection with the development of the Kingdom of God. This, it would seem, is why the Bible is such a unique, vital, ever suggesting study ; and why in Genesis there are found lines of thought like those in the nation, and in the Gospels, and why these, whilst conforming to the lines of thought in Genesis, radiate outward and become world wide in their application. The Acts is one of the very important links in this chain of development, and if men possessed the spiritual intellectual vision that would synchronise with the movement of the Holy Spirit, it would almost seem as if they could, step by step, follow the Spirit in this great work of the redemption of mankind from evil. A God-fearing, scientific thinker has expressed his thoughts upon the operations of God in Nature in a similar way ; but here, as can easily be seen, the work is far more complex and difficult because of the repeated.

apparent failures in history; the chaos and darkness caused by sin; and the almost helpless, hopeless subjection of men to the carnal, sensuous and empiric realms in which men live. Behind every revealed form, sign, symbol and act in the Bible there is the Spirit of God, as revealing the way of Life; as opposing the powers of evil; as nerving men to fight against sin and wickedness; as permitting sin to manifest its hideous powers; as coming with judgment and justice to overthrow evil; and as through truth, faith, grace and love destroying the kingdom of evil and bringing upon this earth the Kingdom of God in truth, righteousness and love. Men in every generation have beguiled themselves by thinking that they had become wise as the gods, and that they knew good and evil; at last the dawn is breaking, and the discovery of men's sinful ignorance, if not pleasant, ought to be wholesome. They are only children; they have never been anything but children, thus there is much need of a death to sin and self-conceit, so that there may be life in the Spirit, and development in the right direction.

With the Epistle to the Romans there may be said to be a moral revelation from the Spirit of God. The Acts reveal how the Spirit moves men to perform His works; this letter to the Romans is occupied with a wider sphere of thought; the intellectual operations and order are now assumed to be known; and thus the Voice here speaks of law; of the Lord of all law; of justice and judgment, and of grace, mercy and peace through Christ. WHENCE this revelation and work of the Spirit? It is through Paul the servant of Christ, who has been called to be an apostle, separated by God to preach the Gospel as promised by the prophets, concerning Christ, of the seed of David, declared to be the Son of God with power and holiness, by the fact of the resurrection from the dead. This Gospel has in it God's power for the salvation of all men, because it reveals the righteousness of God, by, and through, that power known to men as faith. The meaning of faith here being, that spiritual life is faith, and that, without faith, as God's power, man is not living but dead. Men have sinned, and the wrath of God is revealed against sin. Men were not left in the darkness, they did possess the light of nature, and behind every thought in nature there lies the revelation of the invisible Spirit of God in power and wisdom. Men have revelled in sin, as history testifies, and this means that they have



outraged all laws natural, human and Divine ; what is written in their own constitution, what has received the approval of men, and what God has revealed ; and thus there is no excuse available for any man, and no man has a right to excuse himself. In opposition to the guilt of man there stands this fact, that God is Judge by truth and law, and that all men are judged, and acquitted or condemned by, and in the light of, law. In this matter law reigns, and "there is no respect of persons" with God. Law here is not Mosaism, or the laws of nations ; it may be said to be the Divine, moral, and spiritual order, and if so, then it covers all the thoughts and actions of men. In this matter the Jew is like other men, there being only this difference, that as the Jew had a little clearer light wherein he could walk, his responsibilities were the heavier. It is law that gives light to men ; by it they walk, and obey or disobey ; as Jews and Gentiles have alike failed to conform to law, and are thus guilty, they have sinned and it is by law that the fact of sin is realised. What then, are men left in this state of condemnation without God or hope in this world ? No, another form of righteousness apart from moral law has been revealed, as witnessed to by Moses and by the prophets ; and this righteousness of God, by faith in Christ, is full and free to all who believe in Him. This faith in Christ justifies the believer ; by grace he is justified through that redemption that is in Christ, for He is set up as a propitiatory sacrifice ; and it is by faith in this Divine method of salvation that there is remission of sins. This form of righteousness has been declared, openly proclaimed by God ; He is just and He justifies, declares to be righteous all who accept this offer of reconciliation and peace. If then this is the fundamental principle that underlies the Gospel of salvation, it must follow that there cannot be any boasting on the part of Jew, Gentile, heathen, or Christian, on the ground of moral perfection and uprightness ; there is no difference, all are under the ban of moral law, they have fallen from manhood ; they are outlawed, and by the moral law they are condemned. If this is the true reading of the Will of God in this matter, then is the moral law void, and not obligatory on men ? The conception is a foolish one, there cannot be a change in moral law, as the order of life for men ; all the laws of God are Divine as the natural order, therefore the moral law remains, nay more, it is established upon a Foundation that cannot be moved, even upon the righteousness of God in Christ.

WHEN was this new order revealed to men in that special sense conceived as spiritual? It was to Abraham, because according to Scripture, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." He did not do works that are under moral law for salvation; he believed the promise of God, and that faith found in him was the manifestation of the life of grace in his soul. As this justification by grace, through faith, was before circumcision, or Mosaic law, moral or ceremonial, it clearly follows that grace and faith, in order of precedence, is before all forms of legalism; they may become signs or even means of grace, by the educational value they possess, but there is nothing in them that can cancel that root of faith from which they have their virtue and value. Is it unreasonable to believe the promises of God? Of all things this is the most reasonable, even though men do not understand all that the promises of God mean. In a real and true sense every creature lives upon the promises of God; every infant is nourished upon them, every child is educated upon them, and every man in his actions relies upon them. In a very wide sense, creation, order, law, providence are all the promises of God, and He fulfils them in His own way. It is reasonable for men to believe this; in fact, it is only by perverted reasoning that they can do anything else. As in the natural, so in the spiritual, God is pleased to declare a whole realm of promises, in that first promise of the Seed; and it is in Abraham that the promises become a conscious thought realised in mankind. As in the natural, so in the spiritual; as by the many sciences the order of the promises of God will be understood by scientific law, so by the Spirit of God and the Method of Christ, in the Word the gracious promises of God will be known in their order and understood as law.

Putting aside the words "imputation" and "justification" as intellectual signs not easily understood, the plain matter of fact may be expressed in these words; that God is pleased in His Grace to enter into gracious relations with sinful men, and if they believe His Word and trust His promises on their behalf, their sins will be pardoned, and they will have peace with God through Christ. But men may object, as they have objected through all the ages, to such a simple definition of the way of salvation. The only reply to any such objection is, that men have proved themselves to be fools; as a rule, as with theologians, the way of salvation is by knowledge, and the pursuit after know-

ledge has been fruitful of evil as well as of good. There is no question raised here as to the value of theology; the point is simply that so well illustrated by the man-slayer and the city of Refuge. The all important matter is the open gate and safety from the avenger of blood; to stand outside and argue about points of doctrine, or whether the gate is wide enough, or rightly hung, is awfully absurd; the assumption is that the man is anxious to save his life; there is the gate and safety; and close behind, at his very heels, is the avenger of blood. There is faith in the man-slayer; he strains every nerve to get inside the gate and when inside he is safe; he is defended by gate, walls, and friends; he is saved and has found peace. Of course every illustration will have in it something of the earthly forms of thought; in this story of the man-slayer there is assumed to be much effort to reach the gate; whilst faith in the soul may be a simple decision that thus it is, and thus it shall be; every risk is accepted, and the promise of God is implicitly accepted as a fact that is not to be doubted. Whilst this simple form of faith may be the blessed experience of many, with others the position may be very different; lust and passion may seek to trip them up; partial paralysis may make their motions slow; wranglers may wish to argue points of theology; sceptics may utter shouts of derision; the soul may be in a state of rebellion; even the sword of avenging law may try to prevent this important step being taken; but in the midst of all such conflicting thoughts there is one paramount duty and privilege, and that is to believe the Word of God, accept His promise, enter in and be safe or saved. Let the thought be conceived that a student of the physical sciences approaches the university gate; a learned professor of the sciences he wishes to study is there ready to give him a hearty welcome and instruction; the student, however, may be modest and state that he fears he is unworthy and unfit to enter upon the course of study; in such a case it may be supposed that the professor would consider this as a mark of grace in the youth, and would be all the more hopeful that his teaching would be fully appreciated and that the student would do well under his tuition. Suppose another student desirous of going through the same course of study, at the same gate, with the same professor, and he begins to talk about not entering the university gate until he knows all about the subjects he wishes to study, and that when he enters it will be to teach the professor.

Would it be very strange if the professor looked upon the young man as not quite sane, and turned upon his heels declining to waste precious time with one who talked so foolishly? This is something like the position of men who are found talking foolishly about religion; they are outside the gate, they have no standing; they have not taken the first necessary step; thus all their talk is wind and verbiage; they may be theologians, bookworms, intellectual scribes and clever critics, but they are not Christ's men by faith in God. Such conceptions as these may seem strange, even outrageous to clever men who know about things; here the question of knowing is very limited; it may not even amount to knowledge; it may be only the grasp of faith as of a drowning man who knows not whether he has grace, or is graceless; what he has to do is to grasp the hand that is held out to save, and that is living faith in the Word and promise of God. This is how there is access by faith into the house and family of God; the state is that of grace, and in due time there will come rejoicing in hope of glory; power to glory in trouble; patience, experience, and a hope that rises above shame, because God's love is shining in the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. These are the branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits, that come from the seed of faith, and the lesson here is a very important one; that those who think and talk should never forget that faith is the root seed of all the knowledge they can possess. Cut the tree from the root and it is a dead thing; a mere intellectual simulacra; let the tree of knowledge grow and develop from the root, faith in Christ, and then though the tree may take strange forms, it will be alive, and in some way or other it will reveal the glory of God. It is after conversion or conscious faith in Christ, the state of grace, the joy of hope and assurance of peace that men may go on to consider the questions of the death of Christ for sin; the love of God as seen in that death on the Cross; the reconciliation that takes place by the Son's death; the joy in this at-one-ment; sin, death, law, grace, baptism, crucifixion, resurrection, the new life of grace and its relations; the spirituality of the law, good and evil, the inward delight in God's law, the evil power with the captive chains upon the soul; the feeling of wretchedness and misery and the cry for deliverance; the delivering hand grasped as for life, and the rest and peace following these experiences, as expressed in the words: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

WHY is it that the Holy Spirit reveals the way of salvation to men in this way? Was the end of the struggle and conflict not worth the strenuous fight? Was the home, the rest and peace after the wearisome journey not worth endurance and perseverance? Is it worth while to consider whether life is going to end as a ruin, a thing of chaos; or if there is a heaven and home that may be reached? The Holy Spirit seems to suggest the thought that when a man sets his face heavenward and the seed of faith is planted in the heart there should not be any turning back until there is complete deliverance in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. He stands at the head of this way of life; condemnation is then past; the flesh is dead; and the true life is in the Spirit. This struggle of and in the soul, it will be observed, has revealed two kingdoms or realms of thought, one in which there reigned sin and death, and the other in which there reigned the Spirit of life in Christ; the latter has gained the victory and the soul is free. This is where the man stands; behind him lie sin and death, as overthrown and dead, and in his gratitude he thanks his Deliverer who has delivered him from these evil powers; and asks, why such grace to one so unworthy; and why God has revealed Himself in His mercy in the way He has done? It is at this point that the tuition of the Spirit is given in answer to such inquiries; that man being free, he is now able to try to understand the work of Christ; which he was not able to do during that struggle which ended in freedom. It is the plain truth, that ethics, moral law, Mosaism, moral teaching as conceived by men, cannot save or deliver them from sin and death. These are not shadowy forms, they are dread spiritual powers, and they are so strong that moral manhood in the flesh is too weak to stand against them. What then? God sent His Son in the likeness of what was sinful, and by a true sacrifice of Himself in Grace, He condemned, put down, sin in the flesh; the reign of sin being past, then the reign of righteousness was set up in all men who walk not in fleshly ways but in the Spirit. Here are the two realms of life: that of the flesh that ends in death, and that of the Spirit which ends in life and peace with God. Men will walk, or live, in either of these two conditions; if they conform to the lower they will die; if they fight against and put to death the carnal, and try to rise to the spiritual, the higher, then they will live, become the sons of God, receive the Spirit of adoption and call God, Father. In the first great struggle

it is the Lord the Redeemer that saves by faith ; in this struggle, in the spirit, it is not so easy in the din of battle to discover what is going on within the soul ; there are sufferings, subjection, bondage, groanings, and travail in pain ; the fight is in and for the body ; sin and death, even if they are cast out of the citadel, will not give up the outworks, and thus the groaning and waiting for the redemption of the body from these fierce powers. Herein lies the value of faith, hope and patience ; the anchor is in the very heart of God, in Christ ; there is spiritual telepathy, the Spirit is in possession of the soul by hope, and it is by this living hope in the soul that the Spirit helps those who pray and struggle. Indeed, the Spirit is the Helper and the Intercessor, giving help and making intercession continually in harmony with the Will of God, and thus the victory is assured. It is not one victory, it is a sustained struggle and a climax by the overthrow of these enemies, for God is in the souls of men by His Spirit. Here is a consummation of the Spirit's work of the most wonderful kind, for this is the very Kingdom of God in truth, righteousness and grace according to, and in harmony with, the Will of God. It must be difficult to grasp all that is involved in this revelation of the work of the Spirit ; the mind is at one moment occupied with the fierce struggle for the possession of the body ; it is pain, groaning and travail ; there is the Divine help of the Spirit ; the conflict is over, the foes are routed, the sky is clear, the sun is shining, and the vision is heaven. What now is the utterance of the spirit in the bright sunshine and the clear sky ? It is true knowledge at last ; no guess-work, but the actual experienced fact that for those who love God all things work for their good. Those who love God are called and included in His great purpose of Grace ; they have been foreknown by Him ; their destiny from the very first has been Christ-likeness ; being like Him they are just and righteous, and to be just and righteous in the image of Christ is to be glorified. What can any one say about these matters, but that they are the very truth of God ? If then God, by His Son and Spirit, has performed, carried out, this mighty work of salvation for and in men, who has a right to raise objections ? If God graciously gave His Son up to death for man's salvation, His highest and most precious Gift of Love, what will He withhold from men that they need ? The climax is a challenge to the universe to bring any charge against those who are thus saved by Grace through faith. There is none that can

condemn, for Christ lives and reigns, and His Holy Spirit is the Intercessor and Comforter in every human soul. All these thoughts are true, the facts of the Kingdom of Grace, the work of Christ and of the Spirit. Is there a probability that the saved may be cut off from Christ or be lost, or become again the slaves of sin and death? The answer is a triumphant No; the conception is not possible or conceivable, for nothing past, present, future, in the heights, or in the depths, "Shall be able to separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

WHAT is the result of this great spiritual deliverance, this unity of thought and spirit, with Christ and His Spirit? It is that extraordinary state of mind and heart which becomes apparently a paradox to the very work of salvation. The position is so strange to the apostle that he has to pull himself up, look into his own heart, try to think what all this means, and then, as if taking Christ, his own conscience, and the Holy Spirit as his witnesses, he asserts this to be true, that there is in his heart a great heaviness and a persistent sorrow because of his kinsmen, and that this is so strong that he could wish even to be separated from Christ if by this means his brethren could be saved. Is not the true meaning here something like this? The Spirit of Christ in His servant has made Paul Christlike, and as Christ was separated from the Father for the work of salvation so Paul with the same Spirit would fain follow in His footsteps. I could wish, this is the cry of his heart; the wish is accepted by the Lord; it is all that Paul can say or do, for no man, in the very nature of things, could in this matter take the place of Christ. It is a painful thought that Israel, to whom belonged the adoption, the glory of faith, the Divine call, the covenant, the laws, God's service, the promises, the fathers, and Christ the ever Blessed, should be castaway. It is a termination never contemplated by the natural children of Abraham, and yet there is the issue; privilege is not salvation, and the higher the privileges the greater the responsibilities, and the more terrible the fall. What then is the meaning of this story of Israel and how can men be led to understand what is written? In the first place, let there be no misconception as to the purpose of God and His Word to men; these have not failed. What men require to apprehend is that God's purpose is a living one, organic, and not a simple plan as for the building of a house. The Life is within; there is Life within Life, and Seed within Seed; and men might have under-

stood this from the story of Abraham and Isaac. There is the natural and the spiritual; children of flesh and children of God; the children by the usual order of nature and children by promise, such as Ishmael by Hagar and Isaac by Sarah. This is a simple form of the truth, a book that lies open to all men who think upon what is natural and spiritual; but there is a deeper truth revealed in the children of Isaac, which men are required to study. In this parable of Life, the unborn, what is still in the womb of time, is foreknown by God, and before there is any question of good or evil the purpose of grace is determined. It is quite true that if men would understand this parable they must follow Rebecca into the secret place of the Most High, and there make reverent inquiry as to what these things mean; and it is not to be expected that with irreverent impertinence they will begin to reason with God, remonstrate with Him as to His purposes, and try to prove that He is wrong, and that they are right. The fact is now plain enough that Jacob and Esau are spiritual types: Esau being that of fallen, moral manhood, the first Adam; and Jacob, or rather in Jacob, there is the Seed of Grace; the second Adam, the Lord of Grace from heaven. It is this elder Adam, or Edom, that shall serve Christ, the Beloved Son of God. The saying taken from the prophet Malachi, that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, is not to be taken as literal fact as applied to these two men personally; the teaching is that these men represent spiritual powers in history, and it is the spiritual in them, from seed to fruit, that is loved and cherished, or hated and rejected. This matter is illustrated in the two men in this way: Esau went and mated with two women, Judith and Basemath, in the gross, natural, way, without love, but Jacob loved Rachel with all his heart; she was light and joy to him, and he served for her. The parable of Leah and the handmaidens have their place in the story, but the golden thread of what is heavenly and gracious is that Jacob loved, was capable of loving, could endure self-sacrifice for what he loved, and there is no such record about Esau. But in this purpose of God men have said there is preference and partiality; Jacob is chosen and Esau rejected, and is this righteous and just? How foolish men have been it is not necessary to prove; and with what ignorance they have opened their lips in the presence of God is well known; but the fact for men to consider is that they have been children, little children, barely initiated into this great work of God, and,



forsooth, they will question the doings of God whether they are right or not. Who can question the fact that the mercy and compassion of God for sinful men, is of grace, of His Own Will absolutely, and that salvation by grace is not willed by men, the fruit of their thoughts, apart from the grace and mercy of God. Earthly powers may boast that they do not know the Lord of Grace, and that they will not serve Him ; all such powers are convicted of pride and ignorance ; the Lord of Grace that raises them up is able to cast them down ; the very fact that they reject their Lord and King condemns them ; they do resist His Will and they are condemned. In this matter, it is plain that men have to re-cast their order of thought. The problem to be studied is not how men can make the purpose of God, by His Kingdom of Grace, to tally with their conceptions, natural, or theological, but taking the Kingdom of Grace in Christ as the standard, then how do men's conceptions compare with the scientific, spiritual thoughts of God ? No apology is required for the grace, mercy, pity, and patience of God toward men. He has been long-suffering indeed, beyond the conceptions of men, and this is expressed by Isaiah, and by Paul, in these words, "Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha."

How is the Holy Spirit pleased to teach men the method, or the way of this Kingdom of Grace in Christ ? In this manner : Israel was led toward righteousness by the grace and favour of God, and by the way of faith ; the people forgot these fundamental truths of religion, and becoming followers of Mosaism, of law, but not of Moses, they went astray and did not attain to the law that is righteous. The Gentiles, retaining a faint glimmer of the light of faith, became unrighteous and they were lost in their unrighteousness. The Gospel of grace and the light of faith dawned upon men, they believed, and by faith they were counted as righteous by God. What Israel possessed as a means of grace became in the darkness a stone over which the people stumbled ; the light of faith became dim ; the light of law became as darkness ; there was a terrible eclipse, for the earthly obstructed the heavenly ; thus Israel fell from grace, through want of faith, or childlike trust in God. How was this brought about ? By ignorance, bigotry, and insubordination. They would establish their own righteousness by law, ritual, ceremony, and by obedience, or conformity to these, not knowing

that these were mere forms, signs, dead things, that they were as finger posts on the way to Christ, who is the end of all law and the Source of all righteousness to all who believe. Men may puzzle their brains as much as they please over such matters as these, but many centuries ago Moses made this subject plain enough: if a man would live by moral law then his life must be perfectly righteous in his moral manhood; the other way is that of faith in the Word of God, and this is both easy and simple: it is to believe with the heart God's Word of Promise; to cherish that faith and confidence in God's Word, as revealed in Christ; this belief becomes righteousness by faith, and the result, by confession of mouth and life, is salvation. In this matter there is no difference of principle as betwixt Jew, Gentile, or heathen; the Lord in His Grace is equally rich to all who in this spirit call upon Him; "for whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved." This problem of the casting away of Israel has to do with the method of salvation as made known, or developed among men; it is a standing proof before men that the method is by grace through faith, and not by any moral works of any kind that men may perform. This is the crux in all the struggles in religion in all ages. Men will persistently, in their ignorance and perversity of thought, seek salvation by their good works, and by moral law, and they will not see the avenging angels, with their drawn swords, ever telling them that this way to Eden is for ever closed to men. The Jews fell through this fatal mistake; they would run in the darkness against these angels which warn men, and the result has been stumbling, sorrow, and trouble for the long weary dispensation of grace to the Gentiles, and of judgment upon Israel. Is it then to be conceived that God will not be merciful to the Jews and restore them to favour? By no means; their fall has brought the riches of grace to the Gentiles and to the whole world. If this fall, with its many sad experiences, had even now a healthful effect upon the Jews it is clear that by the doorway of faith in Christ, their Messiah, the way is open for them to return. Still the great truth remains, they were cast out of their heritage, natural and spiritual, through unbelief. The result of the disinheriting of the Jews was the new inheritance in Christendom and the world, but if they receive Christ as their Messiah then this will be to them as a new life, and they will receive the welcome back to their Father's Home, and to His Love. In this matter the

Jews are privileged in this sense that they return to what they once possessed, because this is one of the great truths in God's Word, He does not cancel or withdraw the promises bestowed upon men; they may despise, neglect and forfeit what they possess, but He remains true and faithful to all His promises in Christ. The important matter about this restoration of the Jews to their natural and spiritual privileges, if bounded by Palestine and Mosaism, would not tend to widen their spiritual horizon; they require to look far beyond these right into the Vision of Christ and the Kingdom of God, as it is now opening up before men, so that Jew and Christian, side by side, may advance and enter into that true inheritance promised to the fathers of which the Jew possessed only the natural form and the spiritual shadow. Boast not, is the warning of Paul, and of the Spirit, to Christians; for if the Jews fell through unbelief so also may Christians; position and privilege do not guarantee faithfulness; therefore live in meekness, in the fear of God, and never forget that the access to God is by grace and that the standing ground is ever faith and faith only. This lesson, it is to be feared, was never more necessary and urgent than for those now named Christians; to all appearances they have quite as much need to consider their position in the light of God's Word as have the Jews. Where is the Church of Christ? Where is that family of God living in the realm of Grace, surrounded with the atmosphere of Divine Love; united by faith in God, cherishing the great hope of the redemption of the world; and patiently, unitedly, by spiritual means, striving together to attain this great purpose? Echo answers where? For there is no such Church to be seen, and no such visible unity. What are the Churches that men see? They are all kinds, from those that are high-minded, and proud of their positions and their privileges; their Jewish ritual and ceremonies; their lordship in the State as prelates and priests; their great attainments in learning, logic and theology; their gifts of tongues and talk; their keen intellects as critics that would tear the Sacred Word to pieces; as ethical teachers and theistical preachers; in fact, the Churches are manifold, but they are all pervaded by the spirit of strife, jealousy and bad feeling; they would excommunicate and ban each other as unfit to be Churches; and yet, by the strangest inconsistency, each sect, or division, can prove without difficulty that it is the true Church, even though faith in God and Christ is not discernible in the life;

the atmosphere of love not perceptible in the brotherhood ; and the spirit of self-sacrifice not to be found in the visible body. Boast not, Christian Church, or Christian State, Minister of Christ or Minister of State ; consider, think upon, the goodness of God to Christendom and the severity of God upon the Jews ; to Christendom goodness if there is a continuance in what is good ; but if there is a fall from grace, apostacy from faith, the want of spiritual life, a superfluous manifestation of what is worldly, carnal, selfish and self-asserting ; then why not the severity of God, and judgments upon Christians even as they fell upon the Jews ? This is not a time for boasting, and for the assertion of pre-eminence, and of striving who will be greatest ; rather, it is time to cry to God for mercy, forgiveness, repentance, grace and faith, so that the evil spirit of unbelief being cast out, the Deliverer may come in His glory and all the Israel of God be saved. This is the briefest of sketches of How God by His Spirit saves Jew, Gentile, Christian and heathen ; “ the gifts and calling of God are without repentance ; ” all are convicted of practical unbelief ; and it is by the grace and mercy of God that men are saved. To realise these thoughts as they ought to be seen and felt will be like a rising again to a new life ; then the death of the carnal, the earthly will be an assured fact, and those who were Jews, Gentiles, Christians, and heathen, as one body with one heart will say, “ O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? Or who hath been His counsellor ? Or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again ? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things : to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

It is thus that the How ends in the WHO. The Incomparable Light in wisdom and knowledge being manifested, the lights which men hold up are as farthing candles in the darkness ; the Sun rises in His glory and the light of the candles cannot be traced. Where now is the glory of the wise and the knowing, the lights of this world ? They count for nothing ; they are reflecting mirrors and refracting mediums ; and, at their very best, it is His glory that men see ; therefore to Him be the glory for ever. Who is He ? What is the testimony of the Spirit to Him ? What have men to do with this Son of God so glorious in His wisdom ? He is the Christ. Of Him are all things, thoughts,

conditions, relations ; through Him they have been made manifest ; and it is to Him that they all return. He is Beginning, Middle and End of all that exists ; men count in Him but not apart from Him : therefore they ought to be like Him and live in His image and likeness. To be like Him ought to be the goal of men's hopes ; to present their bodies as a living sacrifice is reasonable service. Conformation to this world is not to be like Christ ; to be transformed into His likeness is to know the perfect Will of God. As in the human body there are many members with different functions, so in the body of Christ there are many individual members, but they are all one body and members one of another. It is Grace that bestows all gifts ; and whatever gifts men receive they are to be used for the mutual well-being of the body. The duties are manifold, but they are to be carried out in harmony with the spiritual laws of the House and Kingdom of God. Every form of evil is to be shunned ; the sweet spirit of charity is to be cherished ; and the spirit of self-denial to be encouraged, ever remembering that "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." It is said that love works no ill to a neighbour, and that by love the law is fulfilled ; in this Moses, the prophets, and the Gospels agree ; to live in love is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ ; and to be covered and protected by Him, is to be shielded from all evil.

WHEREUNTO, as the work of the Spirit, do all these thoughts tend ? Plainly in this direction, that the actions of men may conform to the true inner spiritual life. The strong are to help the weak ; the pursuit of life is not to be pleasure for self but to give pleasure to others for their good. This is Christ's Spirit as seen in His life and as conceived in these thoughts ; in all our afflictions He was afflicted ; He bore our sins ; and our reproaches fell on Him. In other words, the underlying current of thought to be found in the Scriptures is, that men are being taught in the great school of patience ; and that the God of patience trains all the followers of Christ to be like each other, and like their Lord and Saviour ; so that with one mind and voice they may glorify the Father and fulfil and live in that unity of the Spirit that will glorify God. It is in this sense that Christ was born of the race of Abraham and became a Minister and Servant to the circumcised ; it was to confirm all truths proclaimed by prophets, and the promises given to the fathers. Having done so the door

of mercy was thrown open to the Gentiles so that they might be privileged to rejoice in Christ's work of salvation and praise His Name. The Spirit of patience grants help in the days of trouble and sorrow when there are many clouds and little sunshine; but when the vision comes of supremacy and of the reign of Christ, then hope becomes regnant; there is joy and peace in believing through the gracious power of the Holy Spirit. This is the Vision of the days to come; but the present is that of earnest work, preaching, teaching, building, new plans, long journeys, and great hopes; the prayer is for peace in the household of faith, sweet fellowship and mutual help; for the avoidance of all divisions and offences, and with the hope that the head of the serpent shall be bruised under the feet of the saints shortly. "To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen."

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.—In the four Gospels there is to be found the perfect revelation of the good-will of God in grace, mercy, and loving self-sacrifice in Jesus Christ, for the salvation of men. In the Acts the Spirit becomes regnant as the Spirit of Christ and of Truth, and in that record the How, or method of the Kingdom of Grace and mercy is fully revealed to men. In the Epistle to the Romans this sixth Gospel is to men who have studied causes and effects, movements and their sequences; and there is revealed a conception of the way of salvation quite different from that of any of the preceding books; the stage of thought is that of morality and manhood, and the Lord that lives, conquers and reigns in this realm is the Lord Christ. This being the seventh Gospel the assumption is that it has specially to do with Christ, as the Son of God, in that realm of grace which transcends moral law in what is thought of as the Divine nature of Christ. The question sign used for this stage of development has been WHEREUNTO? This sign may express a great truth in this sense, that inquirers are here in a new field of thought not bounded by manhood; and thus they may expect revelations which will transcend all their former conceptions of Christ and His work. WHENCE this revelation of Christ? It comes to men through Paul, the apostle, endowed in a special sense by the Holy Spirit, to convey a message to the saints who call upon the Name of Christ as Lord, with the benediction of Grace and Peace. This is done in a thankful spirit, because the Grace of God had been given in such fulness as to enrich the Corinthians in the power of utterance and of knowledge. There

seems to be no limitation to Christ's gifts to them ; the way is open, they are perfectly free, and the only boundary in time is the return of Christ to confirm upon them all that they possessed. They possess "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ ;" they are called into His fellowship as Christ and Lord ; if they are blameless, like Him, it will be well for them ; upon this they may rely that God will be faithful and fulfil all His promises. All this is introduction, the Spirit of what is and what ought to be, in the family of God. This is their standing place in the Divine purpose of Grace ; it is whence their ideal is derived, and it is for them to live up to what is their portion and their inheritance. It is very desirous that in this family of God there should be unity of thought, word, and deed, and that there should not be any divisions. The condition of the Church at Corinth, however, it has been declared, is not united and happy ; it is already divided in spirit, parties are being formed, and thus the prospect is strife and contention, instead of peace and prosperity. The trouble is about names and baptisms, in other words the lapsing from the Spirit to mere signs and symbols. All this is foolish and wrong ; what is the use of exalting men and sacraments ? They can do no good ; this is earthly wisdom and will-worship, but what men need is the Gospel, with the Cross of Christ at its very heart. Whence this spirit that exalts men and sacraments, earthly wisdom and prudence ? It is inherent in men, more particularly in the prudent, wise class of men ; to them salvation by the Cross of suffering is as foolishness ; it does not fit in with their order of thought which is salvation by knowledge ; they are diamagnetic to the whole order of thought in the realm of Grace, and, in the darkness of their own souls, they are unable to conceive how men can be saved by suffering and self-sacrifice. Wise as they are in their own conceits, they have failed to apprehend the truth that this is the only way of salvation ; whilst those that are being saved are confident that it is by the Cross of Christ and the power of God's Spirit that they are in this way of safety, and are being kept therein. The purpose of God contains within itself this power ; it "will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." In the presence of the Son of God, where are these wise men, scribes, and disputers ? They are not to be found ; they lost the way to God ; they could not find or know God ; in the darkness that surrounded them they had a theory about an unknowable

God ; and at last the gods and God were all lost, and wise men wandered in the darkness without God and without hope in the world. The conception here seems to be that God gave a full opportunity for the wise men of this world to solve all problems of knowledge by their own wisdom. He was pleased to wait, stand aside, watch all their efforts, as if pitying, blaming, smiling at their conceits, and scorning their foolish opposition to His Will ; and when they were wearied out in wandering about in the darkness, and could not by any possible means agree, then He sent His witness to speak to men, and to tell them how very simple and easy this problem is, if men will only sit at Christ's feet and learn His Will. It pleased God to give to the Jews a Sign that they would not receive, Christ and the Cross ; He gave to the Greeks Divine wisdom and they said it was foolishness. What then, were the Jews and Greeks right and God wrong ? Not so ; this that the Greeks despised as foolishness, contained within it the supreme wisdom of God in Grace, and what appeared to be contemptible weakness had all the mighty reserve of Divine power at its back. In this matter God has not received any hints of wisdom from men ; He has, so to speak, watched their game in putting up the wise, the noble, the great and powerful, who have had wise, great and powerful schemes for the governing of men, and His counter motions have been to choose weak, base, and apparently foolish means, to confound and overthrow those empires of thought and power devised by men. It has pleased Him to take what was despised and considered to be valueless by men, and what they despised became the means of their overthrow, to bring them to nought. Why this work of God in this special way ? For this most reasonable end, "that no flesh should glory in His presence." It is Christ alone that is made for men wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ; therefore when men glory, let it be in the Lord of Glory, and not in their own sin and folly. This is the Source of Divine Wisdom ; it is treasured up in Christ, and this is WHENCE Paul derived the wisdom and power he possessed in preaching the Gospel. He was not a great discoverer and a prince among the wise and great men of the earth ; he was a servant, a witness, a messenger with a message, ever teaching men that they were not to put their confidence in men but in the wisdom and power of God. On the other hand, it is not to be assumed that although the wise men of this world see no wisdom in the Gospel of Christ, it is to be taken



for granted that they are right ; in this matter they are ignorant, they have not been admitted into the mystery of what is hidden from them ; in fact, unknown to themselves, they become actors in the Divine purpose of Grace, and in their madness and folly they crucified the Lord of Glory. The explanation is not far to seek ; the methods of thought are different ; the one is natural, and the other spiritual ; the wise and the great, see, hear, understand, and judge, by what is within the realm of the natural, whilst those who glory in Christ are taught by His Spirit. There is the comparing of things spiritual, and the issue is that the spiritual discerns the mind of Christ and the Will of God.

WHEN will men attain to such conceptions as these of the glory of Christ ? This is a problem for time, it is a plan and purpose, a great work of God ; and it follows the order of development of all God's works. The Ideal exists ; so long as it is not made manifest it is clothed in mystery, but the Divine Seed lives and grows, and it is for men to study and try to understand this greatest of all the works of God. The position in the Church at Corinth was not what the wise ones supposed ; they were not men in spiritual wisdom, but only as babes and little children. The proof was not difficult ; they were behaving even like naughty children of this world, for they were envying one another, striving about petty matters, which were of no spiritual importance, and thus bringing about divisions in the House of God. They had not even attained to that state of natural wisdom which could discern a unity of purpose, and community of interest, as in husbandry and house building ; for practical men know that unless they follow definite plans they never will reap a harvest, or build a house. It is even so with a man or a church ; if there is always indecision, strife, envy, putting up and pulling down again, what possible hope is there that any work will be successful ? The apostles' conception is that the Christian, or the Church, is comparable to a temple of God, where God is to be worshipped spiritually. Christ is the Foundation Stone, and, in fact, the whole Temple, but this unique Temple is a Temple of temples, for every stone in the building is to become a perfect micro-cosmic stone and temple ; a perfect image of the glorious structure that is the glory of the universe. This is exactly the ideal that is arising before the vision of men, through science, and its far-reaching thoughts ; the spiritual man is to be like creation in all its parts ; and knowledge of the order and law that exists through-

out the universe will be the very nature of man's being in the likeness of God. Any other conception is folly. By this means men will possess all things, past, present, or future ; they will be like Christ, and Christ is the Image of God. This is the conception of the Temple wherein God is worshipped ; it is very great, for it is the universe of being, and in wisdom it passes the conceptions of men ; but man is no less wonderful and marvellous, because there are found the same divine powers in his nature, and these may be conceived as existing line for line, and law for law, in his being as they are found in Nature. The correspondencies surpass the conceptions of men ; it is as a vision of glory even to perceive the very thought as a possible issue, to all the present conflicts of science and philosophy ; to be like Christ surely this is the goal of the hopes of men ; but this vision goes even further, because when this stage will be reached then the manifestation will be as revealed in Christ. This stage is not reached yet, and thus the servants of Christ who possess such an ideal, even though they do not understand it, are not to set themselves up within God's Temple as lords, but as ministers to serve, and as stewards to dispense, the mysterious grace, mercy, and love of God. This is not a time to judge men, or to be judged by them ; true service and faithful stewardship is what Christ requires, in the spirit of charity, until the days of evil and darkness are past ; for then, and not till then, will men have sufficient light to judge righteously. There is room for judgment ; but it is for every man to judge himself ; remembering that it is God that causes differences, that what every man possesses is what he has received ; thus if received as a Divine gift, then where is the room for glorying, as if by a man's own power and wisdom he had achieved such gifts and powers. This is the weakness, the fault, the sin of frail, conceited men ; they get puffed up with vain conceits ; think that they are wise and powerful ; that they are great, and are already as reigning powers in the Kingdom of God. All this is foolish and wrong, a false conception of the Kingdom of Grace, and just the reverse of what men ought to expect from the servants of Christ and children of God.

WHY has this revelation of Christ by the Spirit been given to men ? It was given that they might perceive the Ideal Christ, and that they might be warned against that spirit that was manifested in the Church at Corinth. There is, however, a sin of a kind more grievous than what is usually to be seen in the

visible Church of Christ, as imitating and following what is earthly ; this is the sin of incest, or of a kind of fornication, wherein there is found the hateful spirit of irreverence and presumption. The sin referred to is so unnatural that moral Gentiles would not utter the name it receives ; it was a disgrace and dishonour to God and man, and thus not to be tolerated for a moment by Christians. The spiritual analogue may be that of spiritual presumption, irreverence, sacrilege in what is Divine, prying into mysteries that men cannot comprehend, and a spiritual self-assertion that is intolerable. It may be conceived as an intellectual pride and self-conceit that will not recognise limitations ; or that will not be limited by the sane common sense of the brethren ; and the very audacity of the sin brings about a glorying in man that is as a leaven of corruption in the members. The remedy is purgation and cleansing ; a return to first principles ; to remember that Christ is the Passover for redemption, and that only those whose hearts are sincere and true are fit to be members of the Christian body. Why should there be this intolerance of evil in its varied forms among Christians ? Why, indeed ? Is not the whole of the Old Testament a witness to the fact that sin in its varied forms is a leaven of unrighteousness ? In the days of Noah men were so leavened with sin that they were evil only, and evil continually. In the days of Abraham the Chaldeans were consumed by pride, ambition, and idolatry. In the days of Isaiah the land of Israel had become polluted, and the people were worse than the Canaanites. And when this letter was written what was the condition of Corinth and of Rome ? They were sinks of iniquity, even worse than Sodom and Gomorrah. If these lessons are branded, as with a red-hot iron, into history, are men to go on and permit such conditions in the body politic, and in the Christian family, and tolerate, or take no notice of them ? By no means ; men must judge and punish such evils if they do not of this they may be assured, the day of God's judgment will come upon the evil-doers. As the spirit of purity, of poorness and meekness of spirit, is illustrated by the foregoing, the spirit of self-sacrifice and of mercy is delineated in the matter of defrauding and being defrauded, and in making appeals in the spirit of moral justice to courts of law. Christians ought to know better ; they are ignorant of the Spirit of Christ should they act in such a way ; they reject the wise counsels of their brethren, and they are not within sight of the Kingdom of Grace. If they

appeal to law, and to heathen judges, against their brethren for justice, how can they appeal to the Father of Christ for mercy and pardon? The position is false; it is permitting the evil spirit of the world to reign in the soul and in the family; it is a kind of fornication that is compared with intercourse with a prostitute; it is hateful because it is taking what is consecrated, and making it one with what is unclean, common, and outside the body of Christ. The Christian position of the Spirit of Christ in man is clearly defined; the spirit of man is not lord in his own body; the body is the temple of the Spirit; it is redeemed by Christ; it is Christ's; therefore, it is God that is to be glorified in the body by the spirit of man. Under the varied forms of marriage, the unmarried state, circumcision, service, or slavery, virginity, and widowhood, the freedom of the Spirit is taught; and the spirit in which that freedom is to be used. It is clearly recognised that in man's present position these related conditions exist, and that they ought to be conformed to in a reasonable manner. Is it reasonable to suppose that a Christian, when converted to Christ, is to be free to act as he pleases, because he has been enfranchised into a realm of liberty? Not so; in this present life the liberty possessed is not that of the Kingdom of God; it is of the realm of Grace; in fact, the man is not fit for the liberty he would claim, and he requires training in the spirit of freedom to attain that end. There is a freedom of the spirit that cannot be gainsaid; but there is limitation to conditions; the servant or slave is the Lord's freeman, but being called and free he is Christ's servant, redeemed by Him, and thus, in the highest sense, not a servant of man. The wisdom here transcends mere quibbling about forms, the superlative truth is found here, God is Lord and King over all; Christ has redeemed the man; the man is the free, willing servant of Christ; therefore, with a free spirit he lives in harmony with the Will of Christ, following His example, guided by His Spirit, and it is in this realm of thought that he abides with God. This is true spiritual freedom; it is to be truly enfranchised into the Kingdom of Grace; it is to have the heart fixed upon the heart of all things; to perceive the shortness of time and the comparative insignificance of marriage, death and weeping, life and rejoicing, or of wealth and possessions. The position has been estimated by many wise men in many ways; it is wise to use God's gifts with a thankful heart; to submit cheerfully to the Divine Will; to

realise that life, as seen by men, in ever-changing kaleidoscopic forms, is only a fashion of things that is steadily passing away. In such matters, and under such conditions, is it not evident that a law of the Spirit could not be laid down for the guidance of man; the appeal of the spirit of a man, at such times, is not to law in any form; it is to the Holy Spirit within the spirit and around it; the cry of the soul is to Christ for help and the prayer is for grace and strength so that the spirit may find rest and peace in God.

WHAT is the real problem that underlies the subject of idols and idolatry? In other words, what constitutes true knowledge: as compared with what is false and imperfect? When idolatry is studied from this standpoint it follows clearly that the distinction is, as pointed out by the Spirit through Paul, that human knowledge, as so earnestly sought after by men, is like the form of a serpent, it is a puffed up thing; but it is the Divine love that tends to instruction and edification. If a man only thinks that he knows, and is wise, this is no proof that he is truly wise and that what he knows is what he ought to know; he may be self-deceived, and the knowledge possessed may be as vanity. The contrast is simple, but very significant, "if any man love God, the same is known of Him." Truth is not to be found in the knowledge gained by human conceit; God is Truth; to love God is to love truth; and God knows, and will communicate truth to those who love Him. God is All in all; therefore, idols are nothing. Men in their folly may conjure up, or make to themselves such gods; but they prove themselves to be fools by doing so, because "there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." This is the knowledge that is attained by love; it sweeps the universe clear of all false gods; it reveals a unity with the Divine Father and the Son that transcends all forms of thought. "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like Him; we shall see Him as He is." All men do not possess such knowledge; for if they do not love God they are not in the way to attain to it; and the result must be idols and idolatry. Those who love God are free; they are above all such questions; to them idols are not even shadows, for God is Light and in Him there is no darkness. An idol is not an image of God though men may try to think that this is so;

rather the idol is the shadow of the man, as God's light strikes upon him; the man being diamagnetic and dark, the light of truth will not pass through him truly, and thus the shadow upon the pathway, stretching away in varied forms from the light of God. This is the genesis of idolatry in forms; the man receives the light of truth from God by nature, by his own constitution, and by revelation; there is a state of diamagnetism in the man; there is a vicious angle of refraction within his soul; and thus what should be in and around him in light is refracted; there is darkness and idolatry. The apostle suggests that this idolatry begins in a knowledge which seeks after wisdom as an end; to be like the gods, to have the eyes open, to know good and evil; whilst true knowledge is summed up in this most beautiful thought; to know God as the good, faithful and loving, for this is the perfect good; and the pursuit of the knowledge of evil is moral insanity. Any departure from the knowledge of God and good is folly; it is a fall from the standard of right; it is to throw the soul into a quiver of revulsion; it is to set up man's will against the Will of God; the diamagnetism of the soul is that of darkness, and then there follows idolatry in as many forms as there are creatures of God; and the idols are all creatures and things, lower than moral man; the reflections of their own foolish, proud, or vile conceptions. Here is the true, and inevitable issue to the pursuit of the knowledge of good and evil; there is no true, good, righteous Being but God; all laws are the Divine Will of God; man, His creature, in His image is of the Being of God; his whole constitution is, in scientific thought, the laws of God; therefore conformity to the Will of God, which is scientific law, is for man Divine wisdom. There cannot be any other, issue here in the light of the truth of God and of law; this is all-inclusive, and all-comprehensive; and men are convicted in the sight of God of being ignorant and foolish when they do not recognise this most marvellous truth. Such a conclusion takes the breath away; it actually, in a higher sense than that contemplated by Paul; condemns all men; they are guilty before God; and in very truth; "there is none righteous, no not one," "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Whilst this is absolutely true of all men, it must not be forgotten that there is one glorious exception, Christ; and it is because He came and revealed and obeyed the Will of God perfectly, that men are now able, by His method of thought, to see how far wrong

they have gone and how foolish and sinful they have been. As touching idols, therefore, the root of all idolatry lies in this fact, that men have, in their folly, tried to walk upon two different roads at the same time; they have tried to have their faces toward God and good, and also towards evil. The order of thought is utterly incongruous; it is order and chaos, light and darkness, day and night, and in their vain pursuit men have not discovered that what they have been attempting to do is, in the very nature of things, impossible. Out of this idolatry of knowledge there follows the idolatry of freedom, and men's conception of what freedom means. Are all men free? Certainly, and this is a truth that all reasonable men claim to be true, and they act upon it. Further, the fact is not to be questioned; it is the last resource in all responsible and legal actions. If a man is not free, he is, in other words, insane, and then he is treated as not free and placed in restraint; or, as a criminal, placed in gaol for the wrong use of his freedom. These stern facts tear the cobwebs of theories to pieces, and they plainly assert the freedom of the will of man. But is man absolutely free? Of course not, he is free within the limitations of law, in other words he is not, and cannot be, a law unto himself, he is a creature subject to law, and in the perceptive vision of science, law is the Will of God. A man is free but not free to sin against God and His Will; free, but not free to commit outrages against his family and society; free but not free to steal, destroy and commit murder; if in these instances he is found guilty of sin, folly, trespass, guilt, then he outlaws himself and he must bear the penalty or punishment. Even as men, students of physical science, would not for a moment listen to any tirade as to the breaking of physical laws without penalties and painful results, so in the moral world the same truths hold good; it is a mark of moral insanity to suppose that men can live apart from law, or that they can override law with impunity. But this leads onward to a higher range of thought which men require to study with the greatest care; it is, of course, well known that the power of physical life rises above the forces of energy and conditions of matter, and that, in harmony with physical laws, life produces organic tissues, and thus the highest realm of physical forms are attained. As in the physical so in the intellectual and moral realms of manhood, by the intellectual power of man all the reasoned relations, conditions, order of law that exists in nature and man can be conceived, but the moral nature

of man weaves all this into an organic whole, as subject to law, with the conceptions of moral freedom and of responsibility. By the intellectual power of man he becomes, in a limited sense, master over the physical creation, and it is through this mastery that there is the manifestation of civilisation. There is revealed in the Word of God in strange, but all-wise ways, a higher order of being, and just as physical life is in harmony with, and higher than force and matter, and the moral life above intellect, as controlling for duty, so the Grace of God rises above all these, and though not contrary to any of them, it can make them subsidiary, and use them for the salvation of man from sin and for the revelation of the Kingdom of God. This restoration is the theme of the Bible; it is analogous in every sense, with all realms that are subsidiary, and when men, from the stand-point of the Grace of God, perceive the glory of this realm of the majesty of Divine gracious law, they will glorify God, and confess that the spirit of doubt and of contradiction is for ever dead within them. This is a glimpse of something like the vision that fired the heart and will of Paul; he was not only free, he had been redeemed and made willing to follow this supreme Divine order; he was not without law to God in any sense, but he was truly and most heartily under the law of Christ, that embraced all laws. He had entered the race for the life eternal, the prize was the crown incorruptible; he had no confidence in the man Paul, for if Christ and His Spirit were taken from him, all his efforts would be in vain, he could only become a poor castaway. This question of idolatry may take many forms, it is not stocks and stones only that make the idolater, it is the idolatrous heart that is estranged from God, and that particular form toward which the spirit of man moves, and becomes subservient, is idolatry. The greed known as covetousness is idolatry of a base kind, but the agnosticism that falls down before the Unknowable and worships Nature is quite as much idolatry, because it is the perversion of what is true and right; it is making a god apart from, or in place of, God, and thus in reality it is spiritual idolatry. When men permit themselves to be enslaved by the past as by the letter of the word, the traditions of the elders, the decrees of councils, confessions of faith, or any other form that the dead hand may lay upon them, are they not idolaters? These are cited as authorities, they express the wisdom of the wise; they are set up to be worshipped, and how can men dare to break



away from them, or try to explain them in other forms than those already consecrated? This is a very dangerous argument, and it is one that Christians should never use, for this reason above all others. This is to limit the Holy Spirit, by assuming that the revelations given to men have reached the final stage, and that nothing further has to be added to what men know about the way of salvation. Further, it has this ugly aspect, that as the Holy Spirit was pleased to work in, and by certain means in the past, therefore the Spirit is with that church, or body; what is said is Divine truth; it must be true, and ample intellectual proof can be given that this must be so. In this way there arises different schools of thought, and different churches, and the disgraceful effects may be seen, of venerable scholars and ecclesiastics cursing their brethren as heretics and outcasts from the Kingdom of Christ, and invoking blessings upon themselves and their friends for their devotion to God and His Kingdom. Such men might have been warned by the parable of the plumb-line in the Book of Amos, for when that line was removed, it was to find that the doom had fallen upon Israel, that a curse rested upon the priest, that God had rejected king, priest and people, and that a poor shepherd and gatherer of fruit had been called by the Spirit of God to denounce such folly. Authority and tradition, following the narrative of Paul, is most certainly not commended; the record is history, Egypt, the cloud, the sea, redemption, the manna from heaven, and the water from the rock, and in all these, Israel enjoyed the common privileges of the redeemed. But the other side brings out the eccentricities of some, they lusted, they were idolaters, they gambled, committed fornication, tempted Christ, murmured, and were destroyed by serpents, and all these things happened as samples or types of the evil doings of men, and for warning against such things by the people of God. The root of all evil, of will worship in any form is idolatry. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." There is temptation to every man in his life and circumstances, and it must be admitted that this delicate poise of the spirit of man to see, perceive, receive, and obey the Spirit of God, as opposed to self, custom, tradition, is very difficult indeed, still by God's grace it is possible, because if a man will trust God fully, and be guided by the Spirit, ways of escape will be formed which the man cannot understand. It will not do to reason, argue, set up works of defence, or follow

the contrivances of men in this warfare; this is not a question of outworks, it is the very heart of the citadel; nay more, it is to find within the citadel a traitor to God, truth and righteousness, and thus the advice, "flee from idolatry," and seek refuge in the very Heart and Will of God. These words are written for wise, thoughtful men; and it is for them to consider and judge what they mean; it is this idolatrous self-seeking, self-asserting spirit in man that is the root of evil; it is disintegrating and destructive of all unity and of all good; and if it were permitted to rage and reign, the issue would be anarchy, and hell upon earth. It is in opposition to this devilish condition, that threatens to destroy all unity and harmony, that the Spirit turns the thoughts to the "cup of blessing," and the "bread which we break," because in these there is spiritual union and communion in symbol; though many members in one church, still only one bread and body, because all are the partakers of "that One Bread." If in Israel all were united as one nation by the altar and sacrifice in their midst, how much more blessed that spiritual unity in Christ, when there is actual spiritual incorporation in His very life and sacrifice for sin. Before this most blessed manifestation of Divine love and law let men fall down and worship, for assuredly all that falls short of this is idolatry, and not Christian worship in grace and truth. Here it is necessary to observe that this counsel given is for thoughtful people; it is meant specially for their own guidance, in dealing with their own souls, as in the presence of God, and there follows full advice as to how men ought to live so as to influence for good others who have not escaped from the spirit of thralldom that is in idolatry. To the freeman in Christ idolatry is sin; and thus selfishness in any form is not, and cannot be, in harmony with the Will of God, His laws. This is true, but there is a truth wider than all the thoughts of men, cramped as they are by idolatries, and it is summed up in these words, "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." The man is not only free, he possesses the promised inheritance; he is not subject to idols or devils; he reigns in grace; and by grace he lives to bring about the consummation and the glory of the Kingdom of Grace, by self-sacrifice in the service of Christ. But here let men pause and think what all this means to those freemen who are enfranchised into their great inheritance. Is it freedom to reign in visible things, as priests in a temple, as a pope on a regal throne, as a king in state, or in any similar form

of service ? By no means ; such a conception is base idolatry, worldly, and it may become devilish. The picture is Paul, or the Spirit in Paul, a follower of Christ, in the way of sorrow and shame, of devotion to the Will of God, and of self-sacrifice for men. There is order and law in this realm of Grace, as in all realms of the works of God ; and the order here is very expressive. Know this to be true, and let it never be forgotten ; “ the head of every man is Christ ; and the head of the woman is man ; and the head of Christ is God.” It is for man to follow closely in the footsteps of his Captain of Salvation and in all things to imitate Him ; it is for woman under this realm of Grace to remember that there are conditions and limitations in her order of life that she cannot escape from, and both man and woman will do well to reflect upon this thought, that, in a similar sense, Christ is in the same position, for “ the Head of Christ is God.” To reverse the order of thought the meaning runs thus : God is Head over all, and All in all ; Christ is the Body of God in Grace, to do the Will of God ; man, or mankind, is the body of Christ to do His Will, which is the Will of God ; man is not of the woman, a natural generation, but the woman is of the man as a spiritual generation. The order is not natural but spiritual, and therefore the spiritual, the gracious, must reign throughout the whole order of thought. If, therefore, the woman asserts rights of equality and rebels against the Divine order in Grace, she becomes an idolater in spirit ; and if man will not recognise Christ as Lord, Head and Example, he becomes an idolater. It is because Christ conforms so perfectly to the Will of God that He expresses the glory of God ; if man could conform to the Will of Christ and follow Him then he would manifest Christ’s glory ; and if a woman will follow man and Christ, then she will reveal the glory of man and of God. Such subjects as these ought not to be matters of contention in the family of God and in the Church of Christ ; if they are, they will lead to divisions and strife, simply because such contentions are in their nature carnal and earthly, and there is not that meekness of spirit which receives the Kingdom of Grace, as it is and seeks in the Spirit of Christ to do His Will. There is an analogy in every family circle ; if children dishonour their parents and do what pleases themselves ; and the wife asserts her will against that of her husband ; and the family circle is kept in a state of continual strife because of insubordination, then men know that the conception, the ideal of home and love is lost ;

the family is not the church and the home is not the vestibule of heaven. What is idolatry but self-assertion, self-seeking and self-will? It is the opposition of self to God and man causing strife. It is like those unseemly gatherings in Corinth where men took what pleased them best, and did not wait for others; where hungry men took food greedily to satisfy their desires; and where they debased themselves by drinking wine to excess. Gross, sensual idolatry, unfit for the house of God or man. Surely all these thoughts are as warnings to men, so that they may be led to think of the unseemliness of every form of self-assertion. Not such examples as these would the Holy Spirit set up before men for their imitation; but rather that sacred feast of Divine Grace and Love as instituted by the Lord Jesus on the night of the betrayal. But even then, let men think of it, even whilst the broken bread was in their mouths and the taste of the wine upon their lips, there was the strife who would be greatest, there was the covetous spirit chained to its idol, the cowardly heart that could deny, and the fainting spirits that followed afar off; and, at last, in a state of panic all deserted the Lord and Master. The memorable Sign has been in the midst of family, Church and State for centuries; and what is the record of the thoughts, words and deeds of men? Alas! Alas! it is a record of shame, of strife and idolatry; if men could only close the book, and seal it, never to be opened again, it would be well; but this is not possible; may God help men in their unfaithfulness, for other help there is none; men have made fetish and idol of this most sacred Sign and Symbol of Divine self-sacrificing love, and they have by so doing forfeited their rights even to be named Christians.

This vision of WHAT the Israel of God and the Church of Christ have been is not a pleasant study; the forms of the idolatries may differ in appearance, but in spiritual reality they are the same, and their roots go down deep into man and mankind. It is this selfishness, in its manifold forms, that is ever opposed to the Will of God; it is fallen sinful man; and it will not be an easy matter for ethical teachers to show men plainly how these crooked lines can be made straight; and how the clean can be brought out of the unclean, apart from Christ and His Spirit. How the Spirit of Christ has carried on this work is now the subject of study, and it is concerning this spiritual order that the attention must be turned. The condition of men, even of the redeemed, was

that of Gentiles following dumb idols, being led away as captives to slavery. On the way they were rescued, even as Lot was rescued by Abraham on the way to Chaldea, and set free to serve God their Redeemer. All the past is summed up in his thought, that the Spirit of God has taught men that Jesus is the Blessed One; and it is by the Holy Spirit that they have thought of Jesus as Lord. This is not a matter of names; these may change from age to age, and in nations and tongues; but the spiritual facts behind names have always been the same. This question as to how the Spirit has been pleased to reveal the mercy and love of God to sinful men is expressed in this form; there are diverse gifts of grace, but it is the same Spirit that is in them all; there are different forms of administration in the realm of grace of these gifts, but the Lord is the same in all; and there are diverse operations, but the One God works all good works in all spiritual men. These differences and diversities are all made manifest by the Spirit of God, so that men might be benefited thereby; thus wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, wonderful works, prophecy, spiritual discernment, and to speak with, or interpret, tongues, are all the gifts of the Spirit. Wisdom, Divine wisdom in its sevenfold forms is the seed and root of all other gifts; knowledge is the practical use of wisdom in the life; faith inspires Divine power; it is by the healing gift that the soul is cleansed from sin; it is by the Divine Wisdom in reasoning that mighty works are done in the Spirit and by the Spirit; the prophetic vision and utterance is the witness to the grace, truth, and righteousness of God; to discern spirits is the power of the Son of God, it is given to sons of God; and it is by the Word as Flesh, in the Divine Sacrifice that there is given to men that power which will interpret, or bring all thoughts, words, and utterances into harmony with the Will of God. These gifts are given to individual men as the Spirit is pleased to bestow them, not for personal glory, or to attain personal ends, but for use, and for the service or well-being of the mystical body of Christ. As the body of man is one, with many members, so also Christ and His redeemed, they are all one in Him spiritually; and they all drink of, or are permeated with, the one Spirit of God. These gifts are this spiritual body; no, not body, for this is an earthly gross form of utterance, but rather ideal concept and spiritual unity of being. These are the diverse gifts, the different methods of administration and the different forms that are in

operation ; they give expression to the Spirit ; they are to the Christ spiritually like what the organs of the body are to a man and to his spirit. The Spirit gives the gifts, the Lord administers them, makes them ministers for service, and the operations glorify God. All these gifts are like the body, but they are spiritual in their order ; and within these, the spirit of man, and the Spirit of God dwell. It is the spirit, therefore, within the spiritual, that is of so much importance ; the gifts of themselves though they may appear even to be angelic in form are not the end aimed at in this wonderful spiritual being ; it is the spirit, the atmosphere in which the spirit lives ; the aroma of heavenly love that is diffused through the whole soul that is of so much importance. The spirit in John the disciple and Paul the apostle, expresses the same ideal, it is Divine Love ; but there is a difference, the disciple reveals the empiric fact, points to Christ as the perfect embodiment of Love, tells men that God is Love ; that men should live in God as Love ; and that such a life will be like heaven because it is full of love. The atmosphere is the same, the difference lies in the order of spiritual gifts ; the apostle transcends the disciple, in this sense, that he seems to be laying hold of the scientific order of thought, and is, so to speak, analysing the gracious being, the spiritual body of Christ. As a problem of scientific study surely this is one of the most remarkable subjects ever conceived by men ; the apostle does not in plain words say that these gifts are the very spiritual body or being of Christ, and yet this is the result of the order of thought. The Spirit is pleased to reveal what Christ's spiritual body is, and the conception is thrown out in the term, gifts. These form the Lord's being, and as Lord in this body He administers these gifts. The thought is carried a stage further and there is unity, for it is God that works all in all. The order of thought is very beautiful and true, and it is in complete harmony with all the works of God ; it is the root ideal in creation, and in re-creation ; in nature, and in man ; it is the Spirit that is the Fountain of all thoughts, designs, plans, numbers, all that constitutes body ; that body attaining to manhood is man ; the spirit inhabits the body, and it is a unity if it abide in love ; but, if there is transgression of law, sin, there follows death, and then the work of re-creation must be set in operation, and this transfiguration is by the gifts of the Spirit, as a new spiritual body, and it is Christ that is Head and Lord of this being. This, then, is the scientific line of thought as

revealing the Gracious Being of Christ. It is Divine Wisdom sevenfold and perfect ; Knowledge as living, true, good, right and gracious ; it is Faith, not as belief, but spirit as inter-communion in the Godhead ; it is Healing as the Cleanser of the disease of sin ; it is the Wonderful as Worker in wisdom by the Spirit in grace ; it is prophecy in the Spirit as truth and righteousness ; it is the Son as the All-seeing, the Omniscient ; it is the Word, as expressed in all tongues, and as understood by none ; and, it is this same Spirit, the Giver of all these gifts that reveals and interprets, all that these tongues mean as Word, and as Name. Something like this is the concrete concept of the Spirit Being of the Son of God ; it lifts the thoughts above all earthly forms, and it is with the greatest difficulty that language can be found to express thoughts that, in their nature, so far transcend what is earthly. It is in this spiritual body that the redeemed are called to live, move, and have their being ; their spirits are to be at one with God's Spirit, and the atmosphere for the living is in Divine self-sacrificing love. God help poor mortals, for this is a scientific vision men cannot face ; the dark glass, and the riddle of life, that have puzzled children, are being removed ; they are now coming face to face with this Christ in the Spirit, and what can they think, say or do ? The apostle seems to suggest an answer, " Follow after charity—love—and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." In other words, this atmosphere of self-sacrificing love must be sought after, the spiritual desired, and what is gracious, true and right must be preferred. It would seem that the true difficulty here is involved in the problem of tongues ; this gift of the Spirit appears to have fascinated the Corinthians as if it above all others was specially to be desired. Taking these gifts in their order, this is the eighth ; in the method of Christ this is where conflict, the altar, and self-sacrifice in love are found ; it is into this breach the Word steps ; and by the Word, through the Spirit, all tongues are interpreted in Christ, the Son and Word of God. As a matter of course, the root of all these divisions is Babel-confusion ; men do not think truly ; their thoughts are perverted as related to facts ; their words correspond with their thoughts, and thus tongues and babbling that men cannot comprehend. The great revolution that is required therefore is true thinking ; when men's thoughts are true and right, then they will understand each other, because their words will harmonise with their thoughts and actions. It

is the unity in the Word that the redeemed should seek after, not diversity of tongues, because tongues are not a sign given for believers in the Word, but for unbelievers ; they have had this sign in their midst through all the generations and they have become accustomed to it ; but it is a new form of the sign when by the Spirit of God men talk in many tongues, and they are all interpreted by the same Spirit. This sign, be it observed, is important, it is the Lord Christ, as Word, to unite all men in the same Spirit ; and this end could only be attained by His death as the Sacrifice for sin. It is evident that these thoughts only touch the fringe of a very great subject for future study ; it is a glance at a science of transcendent glory ; it is the vision of an order and realm of law that surpasses law and gospels. In the Old Testament the How, or order of the outward visible symbols are revealed ; in the Gospels the How of the Man, the Son of God is made manifest ; in the Acts the How of the Spirit's operations are taught ; but here the How transcends all these, because all visible forms are dispensed with, the Spirit, as abstract concepts in words is discerned, and these are to be conceived as the spiritual organic body of Christ. To put this matter in another form : Wisdom is the very being of Christ, in it is enshrined all that He is ; Knowledge is the life of His body as organic thought ; Spirit is His as the Spirit of God ; Psychic Health, Holiness, is His as His heart and soul ; Wonder, or Miracle, or Light, or Science, express How He works ; Prophecy is the truth and righteous order of all miracles as law in harmony with moral order ; Spirit discernment is the Son of God possessing all these powers, piercing through all with Divine Wisdom, and co-ordinating all in His own mystic body ; Tongues are spiritual signs, in Him they are the Word, the Man made Flesh, the sacrifice for sin ; but in men confusion, sin, hatred, murder ; by Interpretation of Tongues that Sacrifice is efficient and Spiritual by the Spirit of Christ for salvation. To fall back upon the symbol of the Temple, or the body of man ; these gifts, or powers, or spiritual concepts, are as the body of Christ which He inhabits ; but here the face must be veiled and the shoes removed from the feet, for the concept here is God, the Eternal Spirit, and the place is Heaven, and Heaven is Love. Is a higher conception than this of Christ possible ? It is a consummation of thought truly marvellous ; and yet step by step, and stage by stage, this vision has been developed, and it is in complete harmony with those



lower concepts that can be traced in Nature, man, and in the Word. "God is not the author of confusion but of peace." This realm is not chaos and darkness but science and light ; therefore, let those who think that they are prophets, lovers of what is true, right and gracious, carefully consider these things ; and let those who are spiritually minded compare spiritual thoughts with spiritual thoughts and see what the result will be. "Let all things be done decently and in order."

Who is this King of Glory ? He is the Christ revealed in the Gospels ; received in faith by Christians, and they are saved by Him. He is the Christ that died a Sacrifice for sin on the Cross, Who was buried, and Who rose again from the dead on the third day. He was seen alive by Peter, by all the twelve disciples, by five hundred people at one time, by James, by all the apostles, and last of all by Paul. These are the witnesses to the fact that Christ rose from the dead ; as a fact it is fully attested, and further proof is unnecessary. Christians believe this fact to be true ; the history of the past 2,000 years in Christendom contains one form of proof ; the Bible, as the Word of God, asserts the truth in many ways, and every thoughtful Christian carries in his own soul a proof that Christ lives and reigns. It is too late in the day to begin to discuss this question ; it is now plain that those who are sceptical are not willing to believe, and that in their natural state no proof can be given to them that will convince them of this transcendent truth. The vicious limited circle of natural things in which they live and move is as a shut door against the Light from heaven ; in the darkness the Seed of Life cannot germinate ; they harden their hearts against the incoming Spirit of Grace, and thus they are utterly unable to give an opinion, and far less are they able to reason upon this subject. By their own confession they are convicted of wilful ignorance, or of prejudiced pre-conceptions, therefore it is utterly useless to reason with men about a matter which they have judged to be impossible. To Christians this is an important subject of study ; here in this strange Gospel they are brought face to face with the Son of God ; they have seen His glorified body in the revelation of the Spirit, and now they would listen to what the Spirit will reveal as to the resurrection from the dead. Christ is risen ; He is the Firstfruits of those who had fallen asleep. By the man Adam came death ; by the Man, the Lord Christ, came Life ; in Adam a reign of death ; in Christ the reign of

life, and each realm in its own order. Christ is Firstfruits, and after Christ those He has saved. When? At His coming. When did He begin to come, and when will that coming end? This is not revealed; it is a vision of home, rest, and sleep; it is well, for He doeth all things well. But there will come an end to the Kingdom of Grace; He will deliver up this Kingdom to the Father, when He is triumphant and all His enemies are subdued; the last enemy to be destroyed, trampled under His feet, is death. The Father has put all things under the Son; with this conception it is an assumed truth that in this Kingdom of Grace, Christ has in a true and real sense been subject; the Grace that is Divine, above all principalities and powers, humbled Himself and became Subject. This service and sacrifice was Grace regnant; it is how grace is revealed and made manifest; it is how the Highest serves the lowest, and by sacrifice redeems, saves, and sanctifies. The end is the Beatific vision; it is God as All in all; it is the consummation of the Divine Immanuel, as revealed by the method of Christ, in each redeemed soul, and it is also the Divine Transcendence in ways that men cannot understand. If these thoughts were not true and absolutely reliable, what benefit would Christians receive from that strange baptism, known as "baptism for the dead"? Whence this strange figure of thought, and what can it mean? Is it not like that anointing in the quiet home at Bethany a few days before the Lord's death? He was anointed; the chrism was poured out upon Him, and thus He was consecrated as by the Holy Spirit; He was baptised for the dead. Is it the recognition of the fact that this Jordan lies in the way to the promised land, and the home of the soul, and that there is a willing passage through the dark valley to reach the land of life, sunshine, and happiness? Is it the consecration of being, doing, and suffering, the Will of God, with a will perfectly resigned to His Will? Is this the baptism that few can face serenely and in peace, but rather with fear and trembling and straitened in the spirit until it is accomplished? There is a need be for all this as Christians know; there has been that awful reversal of nature by which the natural became perverted; the heavenly in man was trampled under the powers of the earthly, and thus the earthly reigned in the mortal body. Christ is the quickening Spirit of Life; the Spiritual, the Restorer of the heavenly, and thus those who once bore the image of the earthly will bear the image of the

heavenly and the spiritual; and as spiritual, in the image of Christ, inherit the Kingdom of God. All this reasoning throws the thoughts back upon what Christ is in Himself as Son of God and Saviour; it assumes the divine unity in Christ, the Head of the redeemed; it pre-supposes His Living Spirit as regnant in Divine order; and at the moment, and in the way designed and purposed by the Spirit, those that are asleep, and those that are awake, will be changed; the Spiritual Life will assert supremacy; death will be swallowed up in the victory of life; the poisonous fangs of sin will be destroyed and law will reign; the grave and the darkness will vanish and the redeemed will thank God with joyful hearts that this supreme victory has been gained "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.—In the First Epistle to the Corinthians the leading thought is that in this revelation of the Holy Spirit, by a letter, there is found, it may be, the highest conception man has attained of Jesus Christ as the Son of God. The leading question is Whereunto? and the vision revealed is Christ in Glory and the resurrection from the dead, through the power, wisdom, and victory of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this Epistle or Gospel, the leading thoughts are those of sin and suffering, endurance and deliverance, sacrifice and mercy, comfort and consolation; it is the eighth in order, and thus it falls in with Christ as Sacrifice and Saviour. In the order of the Beatitudes, the seventh is the Peacemaker; in the eighth the conception is persecution for righteousness sake, and the blessed promise "theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." The question specially bearing upon this letter is Whether? and it is now necessary, in as brief a manner as possible, to ask the usual questions, in the light of the method of Christ, and see what responses will come from this Epistle.

WHENCE this letter and whether do its contents lead men? It comes from Paul as representing the Holy Spirit, as the man through whom the Spirit is pleased to work, with the benediction of grace from the Father, the God of all Grace, and peace from the Lord Christ, the Prince of Peace. To those who are in great trouble and sorrow, it is a consolation to know that God is the Father of mercies and comfort, and that as the sufferings of, or for, Christ abound in His followers, so the consolations that are required at such a time abound by Christ. The Christian life as pilgrimage, warfare, struggle, is not pleasant and easy; rather

it is comparable to a man burdened beyond his strength ; or, as a man under the sentence of death ; he knows not the moment when he will fall and be crushed under the pressure resting upon him, or the sentence of death be carried into effect. The man is surrounded by death, past, present, and future, and yet he lives ; he has been, he is, and he will be delivered, because he is helped by the prayers of his friends, by a living faith in his heart in simplicity and sincerity, and by the grace of God. All that has been written, said, and done in the past is true and right, not doubtful, for all the promises of God in Christ are faithful, and they will be performed to the glory of God. There is a season of separation, a time of sorrow, sin and its evil consequences, censure and forgiveness, an open door to the West, triumph in Christ, the work of the Gospel, salvation to those who hear and receive the Gospel, and death to those who reject Christ. “ Who is sufficient for these things ? ” Only God in Christ by His Spirit.

WHEN do all these things take place ? Are they to be limited to Paul, or is there here the prospective vision of the work of the Spirit ? Is all this about Paul, his going and coming, his writing and preaching, or is it the Spirit in Paul, by this means making Paul the sign for that work of Grace carried on in the Christian Church ? Is it Paul writing commending himself, sending testimonies from others, or asking a letter of commendation from them as his converts ? Not at all ; they may be ignorant of the fact, but they are his epistles ; and, through him, the epistles of Christ, written with the Spirit of the living God in the tables of their own hearts ; in them is fulfilled the promise of God ; for His law is in their inward parts, written in their hearts : God is their God, and they are His people. No man can be sufficient for such a work ; the sufficiency is from God the Spirit, and men are His ministers. The glory of Mosaism has vanished ; that glory has not merely passed away, it is even seen that the letter of law tends to death, and that it is only the Spirit of Christ that can give spiritual life. The veil is now taken away ; the Spirit is the Lord, and the Lord is the Spirit ; in the spiritual life there is freedom and liberty with no veil between ; the mirror receives and reflects the light ; there is a transforming scene ; a change is taking place on the mirror ; the image is taking shape, it is changing from glory to glory ; and there is spiritual development. What is the image in the mirror, and who can recognise it ? Is it a man in the image of Christ ? No, it is the glory of the Lord,

by the Lord the Spirit. How strange the vision and how wonderful the change ; now a poor wayfarer on the highway of life, burdened beyond strength to endure the pressure, and death on every side, there is a turn as to right angle, the darkness is completely gone, and the poor man cannot discern his own likeness ; the picture in the mirror is not the man, it is the Lord the Spirit as the glory of the Lord.

This is something like the scene on the Holy Mount, and the transfiguration of the Lord ; only the stage of development has revealed a vision of truth which men could hardly contemplate ; the strangest of all strange thoughts is this, that men are transfigured and they are in glory, like, and with their Lord, but they cannot identify their Lord or themselves, because the image they see is the Lord the Spirit. This is a great truth ; it is what men ought to expect ; because if, as Third in the order of development, the Spirit is all that is in the Father and Son as wise design, purpose, numbers, etc., etc., and creation is the Spirit as made manifest by development ; it is the same issue here, the reality in Nature, and in man is the Lord the Spirit. Why this transcendent revelation of this truth of the Lord the Spirit at this special point ? It is for the purpose of revealing another vision of the work of the Lord the Spirit, in this most marvellous story of redemption. The eye turns now not upon the poor pilgrim overburdened and ready to die ; but upon the minister, the servant, who has received mercy and grace, preaching “ the glorious Gospel of Christ ; ” the light shines in his heart by the fiat of God ; and it is “ the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” This light is a great treasure, and it possesses most excellent power, even the power of God. The man no longer struggles in the deep waters crying, “ Lord, help, I perish ! ” he walks upon the waves triumphant ; and the life is so buoyant that it cannot be submerged by the angry waters. The time of fainting is past, there is inward renewal by the Spirit ; the afflictions now so easily carried are momentary, are working out a glory that cannot be measured by time or weighed by eternity. The man has the open eye to see, and the spirit to discern what this means ; it is not death ; it is a dissolving view in which the frail tabernacle of the desert life is taken away to be replaced by that spiritual building of God already contemplated as the gifts of the Spirit ; that eternal glorious vision that is in the heavens. How desirable is that “ building of

God" as compared with the mortal body ; it is the resurrection life ; death has disappeared and the life that is eternal reigns. WHY this vision in this particular form and at such a time ? The reason is not difficult to discover ; this is the ideal, the great hope ; the seed of grace is in the soul, it has developed upward a few stages ; the earnest of the Spirit has been consciously realised ; and the spirit has begun to inquire about this new life, this conversion, this work going on in the soul. There is a strange feeling, not easily explained, because not clearly understood ; the spirit has awakened to the fact that it has two homes, the one in the body, the other in, or with, the Lord ; but to settle down and make the body the permanent home is not right ; it is better to cherish the thought that absence from the body and presence with the Lord is the right conception of the facts, and the issue to be desired. It is this thought that leads to the strenuous Christian life, so that whether at home in the body, or with the Lord in glory, there may through grace be acceptance and acquittance. This man is in the world but he is not of it ; his face is steadfastly set for the Jerusalem that is above ; he pleads with men on the way ; to many he appears as if he were beside himself, a mere visionary ; yet he is sober-minded, and he acts from a motive that men cannot understand. It is Divine Love that is the constraining power in his heart ; and it is this love, as a living power, that is self-sacrifice : a life that will not be subject to the flesh, or recognise what is earthly in form ; it is the Christ life ; and the new creation in Him. What then is the result of this conscious awakening to God, and all that this Gospel means to men ? Just what men ought to expect, a revolution in the very order of thought as to man and the universe ; the home, as the centre of thought and of all movements, is changed ; the self is no longer central, it is God that is Home and Centre of all things and thoughts. This is the spiritual astronomical revolution ; it is Christ the Sun of Righteousness that is central, and now the problems insoluble by former modes of thought are all reconcilable and reconciled in Him. Here is a new reading of the method of Christ ; and here is a new ministry of reconciliation ; it is summed up in this thought : God in Christ the Reconciler of all things ; men as ambassadors for Christ ; and these men commissioned to speak for God, to plead with, beseech, and pray sinners to be reconciled to God. It is the sinless One that takes the place of the sinners ; and they ought to plead and pray

to be forgiven. But what do men see? God, Christ, the Spirit and the redeemed pleading with men to accept forgiveness, grace, and the righteousness of God that is offered to them in Christ. This is the position; it is the time for acceptance, for succour and salvation, therefore let men accept this proffered grace, for it is to all who hear, "the day of salvation." Let all who receive grace become workers in some form or other, taking care not to give to anyone offence, lest blame rest upon the ministry of grace. This ministry of service is in all forms of sufferings and sorrows; and by all long suffering, purity, truth, and righteousness. The straitening of this life is not in the Spirit; it is in those who will not be enlarged and grow in the life of grace; it is in those who are unequally yoked with what is heavenly and what is earthly; those who try to follow Christ and also Belial; those who would claim to be believers and remain sceptics; and those who worship God and fall down before idols. These contraries cannot possibly agree. How can men be saved if, whilst with their faces sunward and heavenward, they are walking backward to the precipice and the chasm? The conception is incongruous, false, and useless; this is the true ideal: men are the temples of God in their bodies and in their souls: these are His shrines or dwelling-places; in them He dwells and walks by His Spirit; they are His people; He is their Father, and they are His sons and daughters.

Having received such promises as these from God, through Christ, by the Spirit, WHAT is the mode of life to be desired by the Christian? It is to seek for cleansing within the soul, to purge away all that is filthy in flesh and spirit, and to seek for perfect holiness. This is WHAT every man ought to be, what he should aspire to be, and it is what the minister of Christ should rejoice to see in all those who are the followers of Christ. It is necessary to recognise the truth that Christians or Churches are not sinless; in this matter the world and the Church may appear to be very much alike; and, possibly, even as in the Church at Corinth, as in the incident specially referred to, the world may be justified in condemning sins that are rampant in the Church. The ideal is perfect purity; but if the sinner repents there is mercy and forgiveness; it is expected that the sorrow will not be merely a kind of regret, because of a frailty of the flesh or spirit, for which apology is necessary; but that the repentance be sincere, godly sorrow, so that sin may be hated, every means taken for cleansing,

and care taken that sin be not repeated. When there is such repentance and restoration, then this is cause for joy and comfort to all true Christians, and specially to ministers of the Gospel, the shepherds of the flock of God. The ideal of Christianity is perfect goodness and purity, Christ-likeness ; the reality comes far short of the ideal ; it may even be contrary to it, and thus fit to be utterly condemned. WHAT then should be the attitude of Christians towards those who sin ? If they are unrepentant, and continue in sin, let them be cast out of the Church ; but if repentant then forgiveness should be given to them, so that through restoration, by grace, they may live a holy life. This is the state of being of the Church and of its members ; the fellowship is not perfect ; it exists for conversion from the world, and also for repentance and restoration ; let the shepherds of the flock be like their Master, the Chief Shepherd, very pitiful and long-suffering ; it may be easy to condemn those who fall when their sins are gross and fleshly ; but when spiritual idolatry is conceived, as sin, it may be grievous sin, then it is specially necessary for those who think they are safe, and that they are blameless, to remember not merely their danger of falling, but of their becoming castaways because of spiritual pride, conceit of knowledge, or some other perversion of the spirit, judged to be idolatry. Turning the thoughts from what is considered to be spiritual to things named secular and financial ; the question has to be asked, WHAT is the teaching of the Spirit upon this important point ? The giving of money, for the support of the ministry, for the work of Christ, for the poor, and other objects, is not conceived as something secular, and it does not seem to be conceived as of little importance ; it is a grace of God to be highly commended as the outward expression of that inward spiritual state of the soul, that gives freely and willingly, and as a form of self-sacrifice for Christ's sake. There cannot be a higher standard for gracious giving than that set by the Lord Jesus Christ : the wealth of the universe in material things is not for a moment to be compared to that Grace that for a time resigned the crown of glory, and willed to become poor on earth, so that by this means men might reap the abundant riches of His mercy and love. It is to be feared that in all ages the power of mere wealth has been over-estimated ; and certainly, at the present time, it has become an idolatry of a base kind in the Church of Christ. In the surging tide of conflicting thoughts about grand churches, large incomes, high positions and many



other problems, men seem to have forgotten Jesus, as the Example ; the little company of disciples, and the kindly ministration of good women, as the Church. The spirit of competition is who will be greatest, take the first place, and receive the greatest glory, and sometimes even baser motives may be seen which may raise the question, Whether the speakers and actors have any real conception of what the Church of Christ means ? If Christians could begin to reason with themselves as to how little they require for this life—bread, clothes, and protection—and seek after contentment, then matters would become more hopeful ; but the tendency seems to be all the other way, and thus covetousness and discontent reign ; and the example of Christ is forgotten. But this is a problem not to be solved by authority, by regulations, by tithes or by any scheme wise men may produce ; the root idea is always the same, giving is not a legal requirement, it is a great and a precious grace from God, and thus without the willing mind that gives generously, graciously, kindly, the gift lacks grace, and the blessing does not follow. The question is quite as much one of quality as of quantity ; of wise forethought in giving, and of care in administration ; there is plenty for all ; but there ought to be the spirit of wisdom, prudence, and honesty in all these matters. In this matter brother cannot judge brother ; it is personal, and it is voluntary as from the heart. It is not a gracious act to give with a grudge, or because it is necessary ; God loves those who give cheerfully ; He is able to make every grace to abound to those who exercise this special grace, so that they may, because of their open-heartedness, enjoy all sufficiency, and abound in every good work. They are enriched and made bountiful in spirit ; there is the gracious spirit of thanksgiving to God ; and thus the Gospel proves its efficiency by true conversion to God, the new heart and right spirit ; the hatred of every form of evil ; generosity, liberality, and kindly sympathy and aid to every good work. What has man by nature that he did not receive ? Nothing ; for his being in all its complex powers is given by God. When man forfeited the favour of God and all gifts might have been cancelled, did he not sin against the Giver, and prove himself to be the unworthy recipient of the gifts of God ? What was God's response to this ingratitude ? It was to pour out upon men the graces and gifts of His Holy Spirit. When men awaken to their seven-fold ingratitude, as traceable in history, they will surely unite as with one

heart, and say, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift," and all His mercies to sinful men.

WHAT the Gospel of Christ effects is the regeneration and renewal of the fallen sons of men, so that they become the sons of God in all goodness, purity and generosity, and thus receive from God the greatest of all gifts, likeness to Christ, the unspeakable Divine Gift from Heaven. How, it has to be asked, will, or ought, the redeemed to behave or walk in the Christian life to make manifest before men this Gift of God to the world? The Spirit, by Paul, beseeches men to take the meekness and gentleness of Christ for their example; and by these, as spiritual powers, to cast down foolish carnal imaginings, what is proud and would exalt itself against true knowledge; and by this means bring the soul into the state of subjection and obedience to the Will of Christ. In opposition to vain conceitedness and exalted notions of greatness, the defensive armour is meekness and gentleness; the true method of judging is not to be by outward appearances, but by the spirit that is manifested in the life. Self-conceit, and self-assertion in Christians is not to be commended; and where the spirit of boasting is found or that spirit that would depreciate good work in others, this is to be condemned. There is a true standard for life and duty; but those who are foolish enough to compare and measure men by one another are not wise. The standard for all men is Christ; when men can truly and sincerely say that they have attained to His likeness and perfection, it is not likely that they will boast or glory in themselves, or others; they will glory in the Lord, and they will be satisfied if He approves and commends what they are enabled to do. Christ is the Standard for all measurements; and all measurements are in Christ; this is a great truth never to be forgotten; to lose this is to lose the true ideal, the Arch-type, and the standard of the universe. When men think and speak of ideals that they are able to conceive but unable to reach, they are really thinking and speaking about Christ; and it is the Holy Spirit, that in the measure the man can understand is assisting the man to reach after the ideal. What is the position as related to the Church at Corinth, and, in a sense, to all Christian Churches? Is it not on the one side there is a degraded Church unable to rise to the ideal; willing to welcome Judaism, moralism or intellectualism, in any form, but not ready to accept the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ? If this is so then the real conflict is as betwixt the Church and the Spirit; it is a faint

outline of what the Spirit has to do, and suffer, in the evangelisation of the world. Paul is the figure used to show how foolish men are, how full of boasting, what pain is felt in self-defence, and how utterly the spirit regnant in the Church is opposed to the Spirit of Christ, and the Will of God. What the Church should be as an ideal is a chaste virgin espoused to Christ ; what it is in reality is just another Eve beguiled by the subtle influence of the serpent, and thus corrupted from the simple beauty of all that is natural and gracious. It is the Spirit alone by spiritual means that can reveal Christ ; and any other gospel must turn out to be a cunning device of the evil one. The preachers may say that they are the servants of Christ ; but this is only another wile of the adversary, for he is clever enough to transform himself even into the form of an angel of light. The greatest fools are those who wish to be made fools ; and the meanest slaves are those who hold up their hands to the fetters, and kiss the hands that enslave them. It is not supposed that men and women do this with their eyes open ; they are beguiled ; they have been promised wisdom ; they assume that they are already wise ; and so they are befooled to their heart's content ; they believe the devil's lies, and they are proud and happy. This is the false way with the glamour of boasting and glorying thrown over it ; this is the way that exalts men to be kings, princes, popes, prelates, professors, philosophers, and all that is great and wise ; whilst the true way may be summed up by such experiences as prisons, deaths, strifes, stonings, shipwrecks, and perils of all kinds ; weariness, pain, hunger, thirst, fasting, cold and cares innumerable. On the one side the worldly Church, with all its false base trappings ; on the other this servant of Christ revealing the Spirit of Christ in all forms of self-sacrifice. Men ask where is the true Church of Christ ? And the finger of man points to popes and prelates, priests and ministers, cathedrals, churches and chapels, universities and colleges. Nay, nay, is the heavenly response, this is not so, the Church may be there, and souls that love Christ ; but for the true Church of Christ, seek it in the way that Paul travelled, and amongst those who have felt his experiences. The reality here is not in man, men, machinery or institutions ; it is in the Spirit, and in the spiritual experiences of men, and the real issue here is the spirit that endures and suffers willingly for Christ's sake. Is the life and the reward worth the effort ? Is the sustained struggle of a lifetime under such conditions worthy to be compared with the popedom, or the proud

boasting of professors famed for wisdom ? If history is a true record of facts, it is assuredly true that earthly glory does not bring happiness ; and men famous for their wisdom of this world have not enjoyed the blessing of peace. On the other hand, here is a man surrounded by all the troubles of life and able to override them all ; he enjoys happiness and peace ; his soul is heaven, or it is lifted up to heaven ; he has within himself, or in heaven, a paradise, where thoughts live, and words are uttered and heard, that earthly people could not understand. How is it that such a man can speak about such experiences under such conditions ? Do not men see and understand that it is the conditions that bring the experiences ? As stated by Christ, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." He is in the possession of the promises in the realm of Grace ; the kingdom of heaven is in the man's very soul ; and thus in the strangest conceivable manner it may be said that heaven is in the soul and hell in the flesh ; and thus the continual buffeting of the adversary, the swift keen pricks of the thorn, the cry for help, the ministry of grace, the resignation of the will to do God's Will, and the victory over the enemy. These are the signs which men are required to study ; the marvel is not Paul, or any of the saints of God ; it is the gracious Spirit, so patient in all afflictions, so wonderful in all difficulties, and so mighty in all deeds ; and to close the argument, there is this wonderful touch, as of the unspeakable grace and patience of the Spirit, " I myself, was not burdensome to you ; forgive me this wrong."

Who is this that is coming, or ready to come, the third time ? Who will not be burdensome ? Who seeks not what men possess but themselves ? Who is like a father and provider ? Who will spend and be spent and will the more abundantly love the less he is loved ? It may be Paul, as sign ; but there is One beyond Paul, who utters these thoughts so that they may know His self-sacrificing love on their behalf ; and that His motives are not selfish or for self-seeking ends. When He comes the third time, in what condition will He find those who are His professed followers ? He is coming ; the witnesses will be examined in open court, and every word He has uttered will be established. Men ought to be able to judge truly and righteously, and not according to appearances ; it is quite true that apparently the death on the Cross was a sign of weakness ; but, in reality, that death was the revelation of a kind of power men did not under-

stand. He lives by all the forms of power possessed by God ; and it is by His power that men live unto God. What is His word of counsel and promise abiding with men ? “ Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace ; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” What is His blessing ? “ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS TO THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.—It has been conceived that the four Gospels, Acts, and three Epistles contain the Revelation of Jesus Christ as Man and Son of God ; the Spirit being in Christ in that perfect spiritual manner which men cannot understand. The Gospel of John is the heavenly, spiritual manifestation of the Love of God as seen in the life and death of Christ. The Book of Acts makes manifest the method in which the Spirit is pleased to extend the knowledge of the Gospel ; thus it is in a sense the science of the Gospel in its order of development. The Gospel to the Romans is conceived in terms of law ; I. Corinthians in that of grace in Christ as the Son of God ; and II. Corinthians as the Gospel of self-sacrifice and of the conflict betwixt grace and sin. The conception is reached that all these Gospels are ideals for men to study ; they are in the Spirit and the Spirit is in them ; and what men may really expect to find in these Gospels of the Kingdom of Heaven is the plan, purpose, design, and wonderful work of the Spirit, as they dawn upon men, as they awaken to what is spiritual, and are able to conceive the thought that the Kingdom of Grace is not a chaos, but an order that is divine, and subject to law as the Will of God similar to other kingdoms of thought in the universe. In the order of development as of the generations in Genesis, this is the tenth in the natural process ; but in the spiritual, it is the fourth, or the actual embodiment into Christ and mankind of the Kingdom of Grace for the salvation of men. The tenth of the generations in Genesis is that of Jacob, or of Joseph and his brethren ; thus the eleventh extends beyond Genesis and outward forms ; it is the natural made manifest ; also the spiritual as advanced to the intellectual stage, and thus the thought that emerges

here is that this portion of the Word represents the conceptions of men as they, in the Christian spirit, try to comprehend the purpose of God for the salvation of mankind. This intellectualism is not pure science: it is the preliminary stage of inquiry into relations and conditions; and thus it would be that as these fell into their order of harmonious thought, what is now conceived as science would tend to emerge from the inquiry. From the empiricism of experience there is the awakening to possible order and law; the stores of knowledge of the way of life that have been attained are reflected back upon the inquiring intellect, and the intellect compares the known with the unknown. It is not suggested that in this division of the Word, or stage of development, the work of the Spirit is different; but rather that mankind has advanced to a new stage; that there is power to reflect and reason upon what is known; and the Spirit helps inquirers in this stage of thought in harmony with the knowledge possessed by men. In very briefly considering this portion of Scripture from this standpoint, the object in view will not be the analysis of the Epistles but the order in which they are found and their responses to the usual questions in the method of Christ.

With the Epistle to the Galatians the question *WHENCE* raises the problem of the origin of the Christian religion and its true meaning as related to Mosaism? because, as can be seen, even at this early stage of Christian history there is a falling away from the spiritual, and a retrograde movement towards Judaism. This is wrong; the blessings of grace and peace do not come to men through laws moral or ceremonial, but through "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." The Gospel of Christ ought not to be identified with the Jewish religion; it certainly had its roots in that religion, but they are so different in their modes of thought that a representative Jew hated and persecuted Christians, and could not even tolerate what he conceived to be contrary to Jewish traditions. It is not to be conceived that the God of the Jews and the God of the Christians are different Gods; the difference is to be found in this, that Judaism is as the womb of Christianity; and this child born of Judaism is the revelation of the gracious Son of God, the Saviour of the world. Out from the fleshly religion of Judaism there arose the spiritual religion of Christ, and

thus to fall back into Judaism was equivalent to going back into a lower form of religion, in which the children were under tutors and governors, and in bondage to words and forms. The religion of Judaism would regulate the lives of men by what was external; the religion of Christ emancipates men from that thralldom; they are made free men in Christ, and worship God in spirit and in truth. It is by faith, not by the ceremonial law, or the mere shadowy symbols of faith, that men are saved; and yet the laws of Mosaism are not to be conceived as opposed to the promises of God, they are useful for tuition and for preparation, so that when the child becomes a man, and enters into the enjoyment of his birthright, then he will be fit to occupy that position as a son of God, in Christ's Kingdom. This conception is not altogether new; if not plainly revealed in words it was acted as in an allegory in Abraham and Hagar; and in Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac. The children of Hagar are as Israel in the Desert under Moses; or as the Jews in Jerusalem; but the children of Sarah are Isaac, and Christ, and all those who accept Christ, as the Promised Seed, prove themselves to be the children of the promises by faith and the sons of God. Judaism is bondage; Christianity is liberty; therefore it is incumbent upon those who have attained manhood to reject every form of legalism, and to stand fast in that spiritual liberty and freedom wherewith Christ has set them free. If Christ has truly bestowed upon men this great gift of perfect spiritual freedom and manhood, then it is folly to glory in forms and ceremonies; it is the sign of childishness, and of subjection to what is carnal and earthly. The Christian has a symbol worthy of the highest glorying; not as a visible thing but as a spiritual concept; the Cross means divine self-sacrifice; it is Christ crucified by sinful men for sin; and the vision of this great truth brings about such a change within the soul, that the beholder sees himself as crucified with his Lord; he is dead to all forms of outward religious ceremonies; he is a new living man; he walks in this new order of life in the Spirit; the blessings of peace and mercy rest upon him; ceremonialism cannot trouble the soul any longer, because all such gross conceptions of the religious life are wiped out by the crucifixion marks of the Lord Jesus, in the life of faith, humble obedience and self-sacrifice.

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.—This is a brief conception of the WHENCE of the Christian religion and its blessed effects upon those redeemed by Christ; they are transformed into the likeness



of Christ, in His Spirit, and they follow Him in the same way of self-sacrificing love. With the epistle to the Ephesians the question **WHEN** is raised ; and with that question there is brought into view all that is involved as relating to Christ, the Ideal, the Arch-type of all thought, the Son of God. The epistle opens, as do nearly all the epistles, with an ideal thought which may be said to be the theme of the letter. This in a general way is characteristic of the whole Bible ; the first section, in a vital sense, usually covers all that follows ; it is the germ seed with life ; and because it is thus alive it requires to be continually observed in the Word of God. It is quite different with men who study upon the lines of causes and effects ; the summation of their thoughts follow after, when they try to conceive the unity and harmony that exists in what they have been studying. In this epistle the apostle may be conceived as having been pre-occupied with great thoughts about Christ ; what He has been, is, and will be, for mankind ; and, at last, he can contain himself no longer, he is constrained to pour out his soul in blessing upon God, the Father, who has been pleased to bless men with all heavenly spiritual blessings in Christ. **WHEN** did God begin to think upon the sinful sons of men ? And the answer comes back, that they were chosen in Christ before the foundations of the earth were laid ; and chosen in Divine Love to be made holy and blameless. It pleased God to choose and bless ; and it pleased the Spirit to plan, pre-arrange a great purpose of grace and mercy, so that the fallen who lost their state of manhood might become adopted children in the family of God. In this matter there cannot be any question as to the will of man ; it is the pleasure of God's Will ; it is to the praise and glory of His grace ; and the acceptance is not by man, it is in the Beloved Son, the Redeemer, by His Own Sacrifice, by which there is forgiveness of sin. The key to all this is not to be found in man ; so he need not trouble himself about that strange word predestination ; it is grace, abounding grace, in wisdom, that is the key-word, and until man can fathom the Divine Grace, Love, and Wisdom, he will do well to leave this matter alone. When reasonable men talk about the difficulties of being unable to drink pure water in which they are immersed, and it is actually touching their lips ; or speak about not being free to breathe the air in the atmosphere that surrounds them, then it will be sensible for men to talk about the difficulty that surrounds the predestination of grace ; it is the water of life touching their lips ; it is as

the very air in their lungs ; it is the free, unlimited, and unlimited grace of God in which they live and move, and in which they have their being. By pre-destined grace all men live ; this must be so ; how can men conceive of any other source of the powers they possess ; or of the universe in which they live ? It has pleased God to make known His mysterious will ; His pleasure ; His purpose ; His abounding grace ; the mystery is not in plan or purpose, if men knew the Will of God ; it is the ignorance, folly, and sin of men that creates mystery, and magic, because they will not honestly try to see and comprehend the true thoughts of God. Men will persist in looking at things from their own standpoint ; and they are ready enough to express their own views as what they think and know ; and they may even be bold enough to state that their thoughts are divinely true, because they know the thoughts of God. This is very foolish, and such infallibility ought to be condemned ; it is like the old astrology ; or like the egoism of a man, as against the universe ; the purpose is not in man but in God ; it is for time, and for the fulness of the times ; it is a sowing of seed, a period of development, a ripening for the harvest, and the ingathering of all things in Christ. It is in Christ that the redeemed find their inheritance, as promised to Abraham ; and it is the Holy Spirit that carries out the Divine purpose after the counsel of His Own Will, so that the redeemed might show forth the praise and glory of God by their faith in Christ. From the chaos and darkness within which no order of spiritual thought is to be found, there is development in grace, wisdom, and knowledge of truth until there is actually to be traced upon the soul the Divine Seal of the Spirit ; the promises have been fulfilled ; the Christ is informed in the soul ; the inheritance is possessed as by an earnest or first-fruits ; and, in due time, the possession will be fully realised, and the harvest in all its fulness reaped to the praise and glory of God. All this is ideal ; it transcends the present conceptions of men ; they are groping after what these things mean ; and it is a matter for thankfulness that such an ideal is set before them. It ought to be a matter of prayer with the followers of Christ that it would please God to give to them the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in such matters as these, so that they may be enlightened ; in other words, become para-magnetic to the Divine Light ; because it can only be when that change comes that they will realise the hope that exists in their own souls, and be awakened to that

realm of grace in its order within themselves ; for this is the rich glory of Christ's inheritance in His saints. Of all heresies surely none greater than this, that men can save and sanctify themselves. The truth is the other way about ; it is by the exceeding greatness of His mighty power that men are saved from spiritual, death ; and this power is the same, in kind, in men, as that which wrought in Christ at His resurrection from the grave. It is the Holy Spirit as the Power of God that gives spiritual life ; this life is the gracious life in God ; and it is summed up in Christ as the Head of the redeemed. He has ascended into the heavens that are spiritual ; He reigns over all powers ; He subdues all enemies ; He is Head over all ; the redeemed are His body ; and that body, who can measure it ? It is " The fulness of Him that filleth all in all." This is something like the vision that appears to men when they enquire, by the Holy Spirit, into this great work of God in the realm of His Grace ; it is God, the Father, that is the Source of all that can be known ; it is Christ that is the Ideal and Archtype of it all ; it is the Holy Spirit that possesses the purposes of God ; and it is in Christ that they are all fulfilled by the Spirit. Fallen man counts for nothing in the whole order of development ; he is in the darkness and dia-magnetic to Divine truth ; but he may become, in the providence of God, para-magnetic, so that the light of truth may illumine his soul ; should this take place, then the discovery he makes is unique ; it is that he is only a man if he is like the Christ-man ; and when he develops into the likeness of Christ then he makes the discovery that apart from Christ he is less than nothing ; that in Christ he is an infinitesimal organism ; or, if the analogy is a temple, then he is one living stone, exactly like Christ in all things, the minutest microcosm of that body, which is the universe, filled by Christ in God. This ideal is followed up by the application of it to the real life of man as he is able to apprehend the meaning of all that is in Christ. There is fallen man in his sins dead to God, and yet living and active in the great world. There is God rich in mercy and love in Christ, raising the dead to the new life in Christ. It is by grace, as a gift from God, that a man is saved ; and it is not by works, for if it were then he might begin to boast. The work of this new creation by the Spirit is unto good works ; but this is back to the moral state of life ; that is, to the natural life of man according to the Divine order. All men who walk after the flesh, being worldly in spirit, are, in spirit, aliens to the

spiritual commonwealth in Christ. In Him, by His death of self-sacrifice, those afar off are brought nigh to God. He is the Prince of Peace ; He makes peace ; by Him there is reconciliation ; and by the preaching of the Gospel of peace there is by the Spirit an open door to the heavenly home and access to the Father ; then all men become fellow-citizens in the same State, children in the House of God ; and are built into one great and glorious spiritual Temple in the Lord ; a place wherein God may dwell through the Spirit. All blessings come to men through Christ ; in time He has been manifested to take away sin ; in glory all things are subject to Him ; the Gentiles once afar off are brought nigh to God and reconciled by the Cross ; and thus there is only one State, and one Temple, or Church in Him, and these are through the Spirit, the habitation of God. Is this a simple story which he that runneth may read ? By no means, it is the mystery of Christ ; it is not understood by all, only by the initiated who have been taught by the Spirit what these things mean. It is by means of this mystery that the Wisdom of God and the eternal purposes in Christ are made known to men ; it is faith in Him that gives the key to all mysteries ; the Spirit gives strength to conceive the thoughts ; Christ dwells in the heart by faith ; the seed of faith takes deep root in the soil of love ; there is growth in every direction ; there is a knowledge of what transcends science ; the result being the human soul filled with all God's fulness. Here is a vision of glory which men hope to see realised to the full ; the idea being that in every redeemed sanctified soul there will be found all that God is revealed to be ; and all that God has caused to be manifested. Upon this point there rests not the shadow of a doubt, when the thought is apprehended that the Being of God is man's being ; and that all that has been manifested in the universe is in man as a possible microcosm, in the likeness of God. To perceive such a vision, and to have this mystery revealed is one thing ; but the realisation of the truth is something very different. The spirit is free, but it is also for a time " the prisoner of the Lord ; " the heaven of love is in the soul, but the body is as a prison-house, within which there are many limitations. Whilst this is true, the ideal still remains ; and it is for Christians to realise this ideal to which they have been called by seeking after that perfect unity which is in Christ by the Spirit, under one Lord, Who unites them in one God and Father of all, Who is above, through, and in all.

To attain such an end as this self-seeking is out of place ; all receive grace ; Christ bestows the gifts of grace in due measure to all ; and the result will be the unity of faith and of knowledge of the Son of God up to that stature and growth which is perfect man and Christ-like fulness. To attain this consummation of the glory of God in Christ, men do not require to be angels, philosophers, critics, or theologians ; they have to live moral lives in the spirit of grace and self-sacrifice, doing those very things which all Christians agree they ought to do. But whilst this is true, and there ought not to be any question as to the life that Christians ought to live in meekness, humility, and the fear of God ; it is very important that they should remember, as history and experience clearly teach, that men are unable to live the perfect life ; and that nothing short of the Spirit's continual aid can keep them from falling into sin. The strength required is in the Lord ; and it is His power that is mighty to overthrow evil. For spiritual warfare spiritual armour is required, and this God supplies for defence against all enemies ; and with all that is defensive, and what may be found useful in offensive warfare, there is given that divine weapon, " all prayer," which is as the spiritual electric communicator, by which there is the passage of Divine grace, faith, hope, and peace to the souls of those engaged in the conflict against sin.

The manifestation of the Son of God as Saviour and King was fully revealed by the Spirit ; men had begun to lapse from the great ideal, and there was a falling away into Judaism ; then there arose the question as to Christianity, Whence it came ; and Whether it would lead men. The reply to Whence is to be found in the Epistle to the Galatians ; it was out of that Mosaism to which in heart the people were returning ; and the lesson was taught that faith in Christ is the way of life, and not forms or ceremonies of any kind. With the question When there emerges into history that wonderful Epistle to the Ephesians ; and in it the mystery of Being is summed up in Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. Whatever limitations might have been found in the soul of Paul when writing the letter, it is now plain that his highest ideal has been fully realised ; and it is now conceivable that the line of thought expressed, clearly fore-shadows that glory of Christ which is in full harmony with the very highest Ideal. When Paul wrote this letter he had, so to speak, conceived the great Hope of all the ages ; and his thoughts may be summed

up in these words, "Blessed are they that mourn : they shall be comforted." The vision is for an age ; there will be the fruition of this great Hope, and the day of comfort, peace, and joy will surely come.

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.—In this epistle another stage in thought is brought forward, and the question Why ? has to be applied to it. In the light of that past, and what is known of the special order of the work of the Spirit, it is expected that this letter will convey a message to those who are meek of heart, and who, by the spirit of patience, hope to inherit the kingdom. To this thought the letter responds ; it is sent to the saints in Christ, with their elders and deacons ; with the blessings of grace and peace. It is a thankful, prayerful, joyful letter ; it is in the spirit of fellowship and of buoyant hope ; with the prayer that love may abound, so that there may be fruitfulness in righteousness, to the glory and praise of God. Why was this letter specially written ? For this purpose : that the saints may know that persecution, suffering, bonds, and even envy and strife are not strange experiences for the servants of Christ in this world. It is by such things that Christ by the Spirit is magnified ; for this is the life that Christ lived on the earth, and His servants walk in His footsteps. It is with them as with Christ ; they have their pathway in which they must travel ; and they are straitened until the end is attained. As with the Master and Servant, so with all saints and servants ; when they experience such conflicts, this ought to be to them the evidence of their salvation, because, on Christ's behalf, they are called not merely to believe, but to endure suffering for His sake. This is the divine fellowship to which all Christians are called ; it is not what they would choose ; it is the pathway of sorrow, but in Christ there is consolation ; there may be much that is hateful, but there is comfort in love ; there may be the loss of friends, but there will be the fellowship of the Spirit, in kindness and tender mercies. In this family of God there ought not to be strife or vainglory ; the very idea of strife is in antagonism to love ; and to glory in what is vain is a proof that the spirit of the Christian brotherhood is not understood. The true spirit is that of lowliness, kindly esteem of others, and self-effacement. In all this Christ is the perfect Example, and to follow in His footsteps, thinking His thoughts, and doing His will, is well pleasing to God. Because Christ was pleased to humble Himself even to death on the Cross, He is exalted, His Name is above all names, and the day will come

when all nations shall call Him Lord, and in doing so give glory to God. This is the Example set up for men by the Holy Spirit ; men see Him, and at the same time they see themselves ; the comparison stimulates to thought and effort, and with trembling fear the effort is made to imitate and follow Him, so that His likeness may be attained. There is no want of agreement betwixt this thought of a man working out his own salvation ; and the fact that the Spirit is working within a man to will and to do, what is pleasing to God ; the man may feel as if he did not quite understand the matter ; and could not apprehend wherein the two wills work together for good ; but both thoughts are literally true, and when the man is sufficiently developed in the spiritual life it may be safely assumed that he will not accept, or think, that he deserves any glory for working out his salvation ; the glory will be fully given to Christ and His Gracious Spirit. This personal, arduous, strenuous attitude of the soul to the gospel of Christ ought not to be overlooked ; it is a very great truth ; and it is what will prevent men from lapsing into pantheism and other errors. It has pleased God to give to man personality, duty, and responsibility ; of necessity there is difficulty, in the present twilight of thought, to place all these conceptions in their true order ; the environment is gloomy, but there is light and the light shines ; and those who possess the light of gracious truth hold it up before men, so that they may see the glory of God in that shining light of life that is in divine correspondence with heaven. All these truths are reasons why those who are being saved should rejoice in the Lord ; but they must be careful that they do not permit any carnal attainments, or conditions, to move their thoughts away from faith in Christ, as Saviour ; and from that righteousness which is by faith. That a man should seek to attain perfection is most reasonable ; every power in his complex being desires such an end ; in fact, it is one of the strongest proofs that man ought to be perfect, and God-like. On the other hand, the very fact that he is not like Christ is a proof that there has been a fall from the moral ideal ; and it is also the revelation that men are saved by faith in Christ, and united to Him by the life of grace ; for it is the resurrection life in Christ, and His righteousness, that is of so much importance. To change the figure of thought ; in the order of time the man is apprehended by the Spirit of Christ, the seed of spiritual life takes root in the soul, and grows up under the care of the Spirit. In process of time, there is the conviction that some kind of change

has taken place in the soul ; there is a groping after, and trying to apprehend and comprehend what these things mean. In fact, the whole purpose of the Spirit is in this apprehension ; and it is worth while for men to ask, Why this change ? and by what means the great prize of life, Christ likeness, is to be attained ? Is it reasonable for men to complain if they are unable to comprehend all that is involved in this work of the Spirit ? It is not meet to complain or get wearied because of difficulties ; the faith that trusts Christ, and the hope in the soul that enshrines Him there, may well give succour to gentle patience in the time of trial. If the life is upon the earth, and lived under great difficulties ; still the spiritual conversation may be heavenly ; and the hope may be cherished that the Lord the Saviour will come, in due time ; and that the great change to Christ likeness will assuredly take place.

THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.—WHAT is the message men may expect from this letter ? This is the fourth stage of development ; the Blessing that synchronises with the letter speaks of hungering and thirsting after righteousness ; with the promise that the desiring soul shall be filled ; and in the work of the Spirit the keynote is love. The first is expressed in the Book of Deuteronomy ; and the second in the Gospel of John, and thus the line of thought is indicated. What is the spiritual state of this Church at Colosse ? The members, saints, and faithful brethren in Christ, have faith in Christ ; love to the saints ; a great hope in heaven which they cherish as the truth in the Gospel, now known throughout the world ; they are bringing forth fruit ; and they know the grace of God in truth. They are remarkable in this, that they not only love their brethren, they possess a gift known as “love in the Spirit,” and the prayer of the man endowed with the Spirit on their behalf is, that they may “be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” It is as if the fourth Blessing rests upon them with increasing knowledge, power, patience, and long-suffering with joy. They have good reasons for thankfulness ; they have been delivered from the realm of darkness ; translated into Christ’s Kingdom ; and made partakers of that inheritance of the saints that is in light and truth. The King is the Redeemer and Saviour from sin ; He is the Image of God, the Invisible ; He is the Ideal, the Archetype of all that exists ; by Him all that is made manifest exists, in all their forms and powers ; by, and for Him, they came into being ; He was before them all in time ; and by Him they



co-exist and consist. The redeemed Church is His spiritual body ; that body was dead, and He is the First-born from that state of death of fallen humanity. He has no equal, for in Him the fulness of God dwells ; and it is because of this pre-eminence in all things that He was able to make peace through His death on the Cross, and to bring about a universal condition of reconciliation. It is this problem of peace and reconciliation, the forgiveness of sin and the overthrow of evil, that is the great mystery hid from men for ages, and now made manifest to the saints. God has been pleased to reveal, " What is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles ; which is Christ in you the hope of glory ? " This is the gospel that is preached and taught with Divine wisdom by the Spirit ; it is a mystery, about that there is no doubt ; but it is a mystery akin to all other mysteries ; only greater, because it is the mystery of grace, the forgiveness of sins, the reconciliation of all things and thoughts, and thus the means by which all mysteries may be explained. The key to such knowledge as is here indicated is not to be found in personal tuition ; it is a matter of the heart and of love, of assurance, of knowledge in love, and of the frank acknowledgment that there is mystery in God and Christ in love. The solution is in Christ ; He is the Treasury of all wisdom and knowledge ; of what is true, right, and gracious ; and it is all stored up or hid in Him as Creator, Redeemer, Saviour, and Teacher. To receive Christ by faith is to receive, in germ, this great treasure ; to reap that treasure the seed must be nourished in the sunshine of gracious love, and in due time there will be thanksgiving and an abundant harvest. Only let men be warned, if they permit conceit and deceit, traditions and mere rudiments, to get mixed up with the truth in Christ, then there will not come the natural fruition ; for they will bring in worldly and carnal conceptions. " In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily " ; and His saints are complete in Him, because He is the Head of all powers and of all manifestations in creation and in re-creation. Faith unites the soul with Christ, and thus there is the cleansing of the flesh, the baptism into death, the resurrection from the dead, and the triumph that follows ; for these all become the inheritance of the saints, and thus their living treasure that cannot be lost. All this pre-supposes that forms, ceremonies, mere shadowy signs and symbols, have no power ; the body is Christ ; and Christ is revealed by the Spirit in all spiritual thoughts. The risen life in Christ is above, at

God's right hand ; and this is the life that is to be desired. The affections of the soul are to be set on what is heavenly, as if dead to lower things and alive to God in Christ. The life is Christ's life, the new creation ; and thus when He appears in glory, then the soul will be glorified in Him ; renewed by the knowledge of His will ; and created anew in His image. This new life is not a condition unattainable in this life ; it has ever to be remembered that " Christ is All and in all," and so this life is to be conformed to His will in kindness, meekness, humility, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, and, above all, by putting on love, for this is the bond that unites the heart in peace and perfection.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.—What Christ is, that also will His redeemed become ; this is the vision, the treasure, the great mystery that is revealed in the Epistle to the Colossians. It is the great conception, by the Spirit, as conceived in the soul of Paul. From that time until now men have called this the mystic vision ; and those who have followed after it have been called mystics. A new period of change has come, the outward forms are quickly passing away ; and it appears that the mystics have been right ; it is the spiritual that is of chief importance because all other modes of thought are only the ever-changing forms, which have for their real being the spiritual, the Spirit and Christ. What is creation ? The ever changing forms of Christ, the Ideal. What is the new creation ? It is the chaos and the darkness of the Fall ; the loss and the waste, as men might say, being transformed into the Christ like form, by the Spirit, and thus spiritual. The transformation scene is wonderful ; and it is marvellous to think that men are being hurried along the current of life to this strange fairyland, at the very time when many men had begun to give up hope, and some had even dared to say that no such land existed. They had forgotten, or did not care to remember, what was written of Abraham, " he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." In this Epistle, the stage of thought, and of development, is changed, and the question to be asked is, How this kingdom of grace has been preserved and extended in the earth ? The Blessing that synchronises with this Epistle is the fifth, " Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy " ; and in the work of the Spirit it is that of mercy and grace, as the means of blessing to mankind, as illustrated by the book of the Acts. These are the lines of thought that converge at this point ; but there is also that fifth

power in man named the intellect ; and it is specially as related to this power that there ever arises in the experiences of men, what is named sin, or the assertion of the self-will, as against the Will of God. How then does the mercy of God work among men for their salvation ? It is by the working of faith, by the sustained labour of love, and by that patience of hope in Christ which cannot be destroyed. It is not by any works of men that they have originated, and in which they can boast ; but simply, purely, and truly, by the "election of God." This election problem is somehow becoming completely transformed ; it is not now the question of God's Will, *versus* man's will ; it is the glorious Will of God that cannot be gainsaid ; and it is much greater, and more wonderful, than man has ever conceived. Science may have much to say on this point ; but if election is another term for the Will of God, His ordained laws in all realms of thought, then men may find that, in their ignorance, they have been misrepresenting truth, and that they will do well to wait awhile until they are better able to understand what the word and fact really mean. The gospel of mercy to men is not word only, it comes with power, even the power of the Spirit ; and when the Spirit illumines the mind in the knowledge of Christ then there follows conscious assurance of salvation and joy in the soul. All this means the new life ; it is conversion ; it is turning from things and foolish thoughts, to the service of God, and to the patient waiting for Christ's return from heaven. How the messengers of the mercy of God ought to behave is fully explained ; what they may expect to suffer is not forgotten ; and the spirit they bear toward the converts is made known. They are like fathers training their children with affectionate care, so that they may be found walking in this world, worthy to represent Christ, into Whose kingdom they have been called. These converts in their turn are led into the pathway of suffering ; but this is not a new experience. The awful mistake made by the Jews is found in their rejection of Christ, and in trying to keep the Gospel of grace, truth, and love from the Gentiles ; and the consequence was that the doom of judgment fell upon them. Paul, Christ, the Spirit, is ever coming to the converted ; there is the brooding desire to protect and assist in the day and hour of temptation ; for the adversary would hinder every good work where there is hope, joy, and rejoicing in Christ. It is, therefore, necessary that converts should be cared for lest the tempter step in, and the work of grace

be in vain. The order of the Christian life, and the end toward which there is development, is to be found in mutual love, holiness, in the heart, and a blameless life. The Will of God is sanctification ; and to despise His Will is to lightly esteem the gracious gifts of the Spirit. This gospel of mercy and grace is very good for those who receive it in their hearts, and obey it in their lives ; they have faith and hope and they can wait for the coming of the Lord. How about those who have fallen asleep ; have they perished, and is there no hope for them ? Why this anxiety about the dead and dying ? What has the Gospel to tell men in their sorrow, so that they may have the comfort of hope ? What can science say to men upon such a theme as this ? How can men expect an answer that will throw any light upon this subject ? The sciences that deal with the physical order have until lately ruled that this problem is not solvable ; but of late years even the physical sciences have been drawing back from what had been conceived as impossible ; this very word is no longer worshipped as an idol ; and thus the possible and the probable are permitted to utter a word as against the permanence of death, in favour of the permanence and perpetuation of life. Death is the negation in a series of physical changes ; but life is ever present, the positive factor in all that is physically reproduced by life. This is a kind of belief held by some men of science ; they do not say that as yet they know the whole order of the mystery, but they know sufficient to lead them to assert that death is as a dethroned idol ; it is negation, and thus not what men have feared in the past. Now it is seen that the physical gives outward form to psychic thought, and psychic thought, and physical forms lead up to spiritual conceptions ; and thus men begin to understand that it is the spiritual, not the physical, that is of chief importance. It is because physical scientists are becoming spiritual thinkers that they are going more deeply into such subjects ; and, strange to say, they have been found standing around the grave of death, and asking one another whether it is possible they have been making a mistake about death ; and that what they ought really to confess is that they believe in life, not in death ? This is one aspect of the problem, and it deals with the figure, form, word, or symbol, and not with the spiritual reality ; it is to a large extent limited to the body, and cannot possibly involve in its narrow boundary all that is spiritual. How, then, is the Christian taught to think upon this subject ? There is the belief that

Jesus died upon the Cross, the One Sacrifice for sin ; and that He rose from the grave of death and was seen alive by His followers. This belief leads on to other revelations in the Scriptures, by which men see plainly that Christ could not possibly be held by death. He is Life ; the Spirit of Life quickened His body ; and thus His rising is the spiritual triumph over the physical ; and of the spiritual over the natural. As Jesus rose in spiritual glory, so those asleep in Jesus will be awakened to the new life. Those asleep, and those that are awake, at that great change, will know the fact that the spiritual has triumphed over the natural ; this will be as an ascension in glory ; the days of sin, death, and separation will be past, and then men will so know, and obey, the will of God that they will live as in His presence. The physical forms may be changed and transformed into what is spiritual ; the spiritual may become so transcendent, as truth, as to become the conviction of the soul ; but these, like all thoughts, even like science itself, is based upon belief, faith natural or spiritual. There is increase of hope and of comfort in such thoughts ; and thus men do well to believe in the Word, the Faithfulness, and the Power of God ; because it is simply impossible that these can fail. Men cannot tell the How of what is not made manifest to them ; because how has to do with the scientific order ; thus they turn round and ask, When will this take place ? And it may be, ask for signs as to His coming ? But this When is just another question about Christ Himself ? What He is ; His times and seasons ; the great purpose of salvation, in every stage of development, and in its culminating glory ?

II. THESSALONIANS.—The first Epistle to the Thessalonians contains, it will be seen, the spirit of Christ in mercy ; the spirit of the evangelist in conveying the message of mercy to fallen men ; the effects produced by that message in converts ; and an anxious inquiry as to an intellectual problem, thought upon and discussed by men in all ages, as to the life beyond the grave, and that resurrection life in Christ, upon which new light had been cast through the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ into glory. This second Epistle to the same people, it may be suggested for consideration, remains within the same stage of development ; in the first Epistle the light shines and the glory of the mercy of God is revealed to those who hear and receive the message ; but they are seen as in a dark world ; the night of heathendom surrounds them ; the pathway is not safe, the day

of judgment may come at any moment, and thus watchfulness is necessary. There are two classes of children to be seen ; those of the darkness and of the night ; and those of the light and of the day ; the former are all absorbent ; if any light of truth reaches them it is received and turned into darkness ; whilst the children of light receive truth, and radiate light ; and by the light wherein they walk it is possible to discern a shadow of darkness that accompanies them. Is this parable, or is it spiritual truth ? It is a great spiritual truth ; and it seems to take this particular form ; the day of mercy was, is, and shall be in the future ; on the one side there may be traced the growth of faith and increase of the spirit of love ; and on the other persecutions and tribulations from the children of the darkness. Patience and faith under such conditions is a proof of the mercy and grace of God in those who suffer ; and, if the judgments of God are kept back for a season from evil doers, it is because the day is that of mercy and not of judgment. Evil-doers will be punished, and Christ will be glorified in His saints ; but for a time the sword is kept in the sheath, until His purposes are fulfilled and His mercy and love made manifest before men. The day of the triumph of Christ, the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into glory was not to be thought of as very near, as some converts supposed. To faith the promised blessings are ever at hand ; it is but a step from Abraham to Christ ; from the Father to the promised Son ; the fair mountains can be seen radiant with the sunshine, but the valleys that lie between are very dark. From the Ascension to the Coming again in Glory is only a brief day to faith ; but to hope, patience, love, and mercy, it is a long, weary way, and it is in the enemy's country. In other words, this is the fact to be noticed ; sin is not dead, and its sting is as venomous as ever it was. The baffled adversary has not given up the contest ; true, he has failed to hold Christ in the bonds of death, but those who are Christ's will feel his power, and that enmity that is intensified by defeat. Here the figure of thought is a " man of sin " that is to be revealed ; a very son of perdition ; a power that will not be limited, but aspires to be worshipped even as God, taking possession of the very temple of God, thus despising and rejecting God. The Son of God has come ; and to some the appearance is that Christ was conquered in that first personal conflict with the enemy of mankind. They know not that in His victory over death and sin, the final victory was also

gained ; because there was introduced into humanity what cannot be overthrown by evil ; but this new life means also growth, development, mystery, conflict, and struggle ; because evil men have to be changed into Christ's men ; and, in them, by the Spirit, Christ will destroy sin and death. The story of sin takes a new form here ; the conflict becomes more spiritual and personal ; it is Christ and anti-Christ ; the Good and Merciful and that wicked one ; it is the Spirit of Christ in the glory of the light of Divine Truth, and that deceiver full of unrighteousness. It is not this emperor, or that pope, or any human being, that is meant by the man of sin ; it is the devil, sin, and evil in every form, but specially as spiritual power, during the spiritual age, within which the enemy will use every wile to seduce men from God, and thus try to prevent the coming of the Kingdom of God. This is the grim, dark shadow that accompanies every man who is a child of light ; the para-magnetic state of the soul is not perfect, transparent ; and thus the wicked one, the self, casts his shadow upon the path of life. Even though this is so, there is still cause for thankfulness in this thought, that the Lord loves those children of light that are walking in the darkness ; from the very beginning they have been chosen as objects of mercy unto salvation ; and it is the Holy Spirit, through the truth of Christ, that is in them producing their sanctification.

THE EPISTLES I. TIMOTHY, II. TIMOTHY, TITUS, AND PHILEMON.  
 —The suggestion that the Epistles to the Thessalonians deal with what may be termed the scientific aspect of revelation, as conceived by men, may seem to limit the problem to very narrow issues. Is not the whole Bible a revelation as to the How of the method of salvation ? Why, then, should it be limited in this way at this stage of development ? The reply might be that whilst it is true that the Bible is the full revelation of the method of redemption from evil, these Epistles deal with the matter, from the Christian stand-point, as related to the twin subjects of the light of mercy to the sinner, by the grace and truth of God ; and the history or the manifestation of sin, or that which is opposed to the grace, truth and mercy of God. These letters are not expositions of those great truths ; they are spiritual concepts that men are privileged to perceive ; they look into them, and they become spiritual pictures to be contemplated, not sermons to be studied. When the thoughts are turned toward this series of Epistles, it is assumed that they synchronise with the sixth

Blessing, the state of the pure in heart ; and the promise is that they shall see God ; and the grace of the Spirit to such blessed ones would be that of holiness without which no man can see God. In Nature and man, the realm is the moral world, rising above mere intellectualism where order has been disclosed ; and where law becomes the Will of God to His servant in His House. To this conception there is response in the suggestion that fables, genealogies and mere discussions, are useless for edification, and that the end of the moral law, that for which it exists, is love ; “ out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned.” To turn aside from this conception can only produce the jangle of words ; every upstart wishes to become a teacher, and all the time he is ignorant of what moral law really means. Moral law is good, lawfully used ; it is light to the feet, and goodness and love in the heart ; this kind of moral law is altogether different from man-made legal law, as in a State, because this is man’s true nature ; whilst the other has to do with what is forbidden, and with pains and penalties. The laws of grace transcend moral law : because by them men are led to see that even if the soul is in revolt against God ; that through Christ, and the forgiveness of sins, the nature of man can be changed ; and by the laws of grace there is a possible return to the pure realm of moral law. What, then, are the laws of this house of God wherein His servants dwell ? They are spiritual services, expressed as “ supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks ” for all classes of people, so that their lives may be quiet, peaceful, honest and godly. In other words, Christians, in the House of Grace, are endowed with the spirit of the priesthood ; the visible and ceremonial dispensation has passed away ; but Christians are as priests seeking for the salvation, the well-being of men, so that they may know the truth as it is in Christ, the one mediating High Priest in heaven, the Saviour who gave Himself as the true sacrifice for sin. It is to be noted that Paul in thus thinking of Christians as a kind of priesthood, under the one great Mediator High Priest, lays emphasis upon the thoughts that he is a preacher of the Gospel and an apostle ; the spiritual service in prayer, intercession, and thanksgiving takes the place of what was symbolic, and the distinction is not of consecrated and unconsecrated persons, but of service and office. These Epistles have been named the pastoral Epistles, because they have specially to deal with the duties that are required of elders and deacons, those who hold office in the Church.



It is not for a moment to be conceived that the House of God, the Church of Christ, is unorganised, or lawless ; there is law and order, and there are those who hold offices of responsibility ; but there is not, in any sense, lordship as in a State, or high dignities of any kind. The office-bearers are examples to the people ; chosen by the people ; and their qualifications for holding office are similar to those in families, or well regulated free institutions. There are those who are in a state of subjection, as women and children ; but it is not even suggested that there is any power possessed, or to be used, which would imitate the civil power and inflict penalties. The chief matter for consideration in the appointment of office-bearers is that of character ; they are to be good, true, faithful, self-sacrificing followers of Christ, seeking to walk in His gracious footsteps, and anxious to carry out His gracious Will in the Church, or body, to which they belong. The Church is not a limited visible body ; neither is it a spiritual phantasm without a visible organisation ; it is where the God of the gracious Life lives ; it has a strength that cannot be broken ; and it rests upon Divine Truth. What the Church is, in this sense, as the living, breathing, gracious work of God is one thing ; it is spiritual, and it is that body, or being, of Christ inhabited by the Spirit ; but the visible organisation, and the visible forms of office, are conceived as of secondary importance. To put this matter in another form ; the Church of Christ, the Ideal, exists apart from all organisations, and it can prosper without office-bearers holding sacred or common names ; whilst, on the other hand, there may be office-bearers with high sounding titles, arrogating to themselves great authority, proud, vicious, covetous men, more like wolves that destroy than shepherds who care for their flock. Of such, it may be said, that they do not belong to the Church of Christ ; rather they may be rulers of the synagogues of Satan, where strife reigns ; and where men do not live unto God, and do not love the truth, as it is in Christ. The all important matter, throughout all the ages, has not been the visible organisation ; but faith, hope, patience, and love ; and wherever these have been found there the Church of Christ existed, and there the Spirit of Life in Grace has been found. Men may speak learnedly about covenanted and uncovenanted mercies, and not know what is meant by such terms. Are not all covenants based upon faith in God's Word as revealed by the Spirit, and as fulfilled in Christ ? It is quite true that men have been brought

into covenant relations with God at various periods of development ; but when did mortal men keep the covenants thus made, and thus place themselves upon the vantage ground of covenant keepers ? The Bible is one long story of men as covenant breakers ; and thus, in reality, the covenant is in Christ whilst men have made gods of symbols, and outlawed themselves from the covenant mercies of God. The Church in Christ is found in God's likeness ; this, and not the visible organisation, is the true mystery of the ages ; it is Christ who is the Church, not poor, miserable, fallen creatures, who cannot, without the Spirit's aid, live the Christ-like life. Christ is God as made manifest before men, living the Divine Life in the flesh ; the Spirit has justified, or proved, His Life to be the perfect God-like life ; men and angels have considered that Life, and it is seen to be Divine ; this Life, as risen from the dead, as having made perfect atonement for sin, as the means of reconciliation and peace, has been preached throughout the world ; men have believed this revelation from heaven ; they believe that Christ is in glory, and that through His grace and favour they will be raised by Him to enjoy the same glory. It is because these things are made so plain in the Word that men should try to apprehend what they mean. It is quite time for those who arrogate to themselves the semi-divine powers of priests to take warning ; the day is past for all such caricatures of Christianity, which are mere imitations of Judaism and heathenism ; the Spirit has endowed mankind with spiritual freedom ; and it is at their peril that they persist in degrading the religion of Christ to ceremonialism and to the rudiments of this world, as cognisable by the physical senses. On the other hand, it ought to be remembered that the Church of Christ, if it is a spiritual body, governed by spiritual men, seeking the spiritual well-being of the flock over whom they are the overseers, then it ought not to be degraded into a political organisation, a social club, a debating society, or a place of amusement.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.—In the pastoral Epistles the conception is that of the House of God ; the family of the redeemed ; the sacred priest-like character of all within the House, and the duties and responsibilities that rest upon office-bearers as the servants who regulate and keep the House in order. But when the question Who ? is raised, in connection with these Epistles, then it is Christ, as the Son of God, the Lord over the House, its servants, and all it contains, whose House the

redeemed are, if they have faith in God and hope for the realisation of His promises. With this Epistle the form of question is Whereunto? It synchronises with the seventh Blessing, that of the peace-makers, and unto such the promise is given: "They shall be called the children of God;" the Spirit is that of the gift of peace; and the principle in Nature and Man is that of Grace, even the grace of Christ which brings salvation and peace to mankind. As this Epistle is another special revelation of Christ, in a new form, as a Christian Hebrew conception of Christ, it will be as well to put the usual questions to the book, and thus see if it responds to the Method of Christ. WHENCE this revelation? It is from God to the fathers, by the prophets in the days gone past; but, in the Christian dispensation it is the Word of the Son, who is the Creator of all things and the Heir to whom they belong. He is the Glory and Image of God; He is the Upholder of all that exists; He is the Saviour of men, and King at the right hand of God. His glory transcends that of the highest angels; they are His servants; His throne is eternal; His sceptre of power is perfect righteousness; He made the universe with all its changing forms; but He is the Unchangeable, the Lord of Time and Eternity. WHEN did it please the Lord to give to men this great revelation of the glory of Christ? It has been during time with its many changes, with many matters to occupy the thoughts of men; but they ought to take heed to what they have heard, because if they let such a message slip away and be lost, How will they avert judgment? If they neglect this great salvation, then how will they escape the doom that hangs over them? The witnesses have fully confirmed the Divine revelation of grace to men by signs, and by gifts of the Spirit, thus proving that Christ is Lord and King, that all powers are subject to Him, and because He suffered and tasted death for every man, He is now exalted, crowned and glorified. Through the experiences of sorrow and suffering He became perfect in Grace; He realised gracious perfection in the manifestation of self-sacrificing Love. He became the Father of those who suffer, and they are His sons; He is their Captain; they are one family, and He is not ashamed to call them His brethren. It was because the children He loved were enshrouded with flesh and blood that He took upon Himself the human form; because it was only through death that He could destroy the power of the devil, as seen in death, and thus deliver the children from their bondage

who were afraid of death. Not in angelic form did He undertake this mighty work, but as the promised Seed and Son of Abraham. He became one with His brethren, so that He might become a real High Priest in the things of God ; and thus bring about reconciliation and peace. In the great world of sorrow, temptation, and suffering He endured, and thus He is able to save all who are tempted and who fall into sin. WHY did the way of salvation take this particular form ? This is the matter worthy of the most careful consideration ; and to think upon it worthily there must be set in the fore-front of all the thoughts of men, "The Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." There are these special marks placed against the Name of Christ ; He is the Faithful One, the Truth, Righteousness, Grace, and Divine Love. Did He not to the full, and in the most perfect manner, obey, conform to the Divine Will ? Moses as a servant served faithfully and built a symbolic tabernacle for the service of God ; but Christ built all things ; the universe is His House ; the Church is His Home, the redeemed soul is His Shrine ; He is Son and Heir, and there is no one that can compare with Him. This is the great revelation, by the Spirit of Christ, of His glory ; and, if this is true, then how culpable and serious is neglect, want of consideration, the inattentive ear, and the distracted heart. He is revealed ; the land of promise is very near ; men have actually enjoyed its first-fruits ; and yet, it is possible that the faithful promises of God in Christ may not be possessed. Israel "could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us, therefore, fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." The Gospel of salvation is an old story, preached to men under many forms ; but the root idea in them all has been ever this ; faith in them that hear, so that they may receive the Word of God and enter into rest. Faith and rest are closely linked together ; they are as cause and effect ; for if man at first had eschewed unbelief, the rest of God was at his right hand ; he had only to enter in and enjoy that rest already prepared. This is another aspect of the history of mankind ; on the right hand faith and rest, heaven ; on the left unbelief, unrest, trouble, sorrow, death ; and men have preferred to turn in the wrong direction, away from God, truth, faith and rest, to wander in the great desert ever seeking, and never finding, that peace and happiness they hoped to enjoy in the knowledge of good and evil. Has all this been recorded in vain and are men no wiser ? Do

they prefer to go on still stumbling and falling ; and have they no higher ideal than to tread in the same ways of unbelief ? The position is being changed, and if men could only see what has taken place, then the Spirit of God would make the Word powerful, living, sharp ; for it can divide soul and spirit, and discern the thoughts and purposes of men's hearts. There is a Light more piercing than the electric light, and a power more penetrating than the Röntgen rays ; before it all things are exposed and naked, and it is with this Light that men have to do in this spiritual dispensation. Such knowledge is too wonderful, and it may well cause fear ; but the thought that Jesus, as Son of God, is the great High Priest, the Intercessor in heaven for His brethren, begets confidence, and thus there is boldness in drawing near to the throne of grace to obtain grace and mercy, ready help in every time of need. This is the conception of WHAT Christ is as High Priest ; He has passed into the Holiest Place ; He is seated upon His throne of grace, and by mercy and grace He reigns to succour and save men. WHAT is the work of a priest ? It is to offer gifts, sacrifices for sins, to have compassion for, and patiently bear with, those who are out of the way. The priesthood is an office of dignity ; it is not one that a man can take up and lay down as he pleases ; he is called of God, and it is no light matter to fill such an office. Christ did not glorify Himself, and take up this office lightly ; the call came to Him when He heard the Voice that said, "Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee." It was by His prayers, fears, sufferings, and obedience that He was made perfect as the High Priest ; and, being so ordained, He is the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him. He is not a high priest like Aaron, in sign and symbol ; but in truth and righteousness, grace and peace. The one order, the visible, is for children who do not understand what is spiritual ; the other is for those who have attained to manhood, who have their spiritual senses exercised, and who have attained to that stage of development wherein they can discern good and evil. There are different stages of development in the thoughts of God, and these are to be recognised ; there are rudimental forms of worship and experience, which men may use and not despise ; but the risk with all these lies in their imperfections, in men's ignorance of spiritual truth, and the unfitness of men to grasp and keep hold of the truths contained in the promises of God, and in His faithfulness to His Word of Promise. In both these, God is immutable, He

cannot change ; and they have been fulfilled and faithfully performed ; for they are all Yea, and Amen, in Christ, who has entered the Holiest Place as the High Priest of mankind. The Aaronic priesthood was an order that was ever changing, because the priests were subject to the sway of death ; but Christ's priesthood can never change, for He ever lives ; He is able to save to the uttermost ; He has no infirmity, and thus as the Son of God He is the Perfect High Priest for evermore. As a spiritual revelation of this theme of the Divine Priesthood of Christ, How can this subject be summed up ? In this form : Christ is the Eternal High Priest exalted in glory and power in the highest heavens. He is the true Minister in all that is sacred in spiritual realities. There were priests who served upon the earth within the shadow of what is heavenly and Divine ; but He is the Head of the spiritual ministry ; the Mediator of a spiritual covenant ; even of that eternal covenant embodied in the Gospel, whereby all visible forms pass away ; the laws of God are written in the minds and hearts of men ; they know God as their Lord and Saviour ; their sins are forgiven, and they are at peace with God. This new covenant, which is the old covenant of grace by faith to Abraham, becomes radiant with Divine light in Christ, and thus Mosaism and all its forms and ceremonies vanish away. It is not to be supposed that the Mosaic dispensation was useless ; the ordinances had a Divine form and there was an earthly sanctuary ; but they were symbols, or patterns, of true spiritual realities, used for the education of Israel, so that they might rise above earthly and heathenish conceptions, and through the study of symbols come to understand what they mean. In the Mosaic order men were taught by the Spirit, that the way into the holiest place was not made manifest, because the high priest could only enter therein once a year, on the great Day of Atonement. When Christ fulfilled that day, in His Own death for sin, then he entered in, the veil was rent in twain, and what had been mystery was revealed. What could not cleanse or save man as symbol was abolished, and the Mediator of the New Testament, by the Holy Spirit, administered that Testament in the hearts of men, Christ appearing in the presence of God for all those who put their trust in Him. This is How Christ fulfilled all that was involved or symbolised in Mosaism, and at the same time offered Himself a true sacrifice for sin ; and to those who look for, and put their trust in Him, He will re-appear a second time without sin unto salvation.

The peculiarity that attaches to all that is symbolic—let it be Mosaism, or words with their meanings, or relations of thoughts, or scientific order—is that men are dealing with the shadows of things, images, it may be, but not what makes truth perfect and lawful. This is the inherent weakness in every form of intellectualism; it gives many reasons; there are manifold lines of thought, but they do not converge into one heart, and cause that heart to burn, to glow with love and devotion toward God the Lawgiver. This is the great distinction between intellectual theorising and moral devotion; in the one the order produces a mental acquiescence, or love of truth; in the other the truth converges into the soul, and there is adoration, devotion, and duty. Sacrifice, burnt-offering, ritual, and ceremony in all their varied forms must fail, there is no heart in them; thus they cannot give pleasure to God. But when Christ found the body prepared, and the whole order of the laws of God involved in that body, then He said, “Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God.” Then the symbolic, or the intellectual, became moral, and the intellectual was established in the moral. This is an important point, and it is the test of manhood; it is not mere reasoning about things; it is the moral action of the will co-operating with the Spirit of God to execute His Will. By His Will Christ offered Himself a true and acceptable sacrifice to God; that Offering was accepted, and by it men are saved and sanctified. Priests of the Aaronic order were ever offering sacrifices which could not save or cleanse the soul, or give peace; but Christ’s sacrifice, as to its value, can never be questioned by reasonable moral men; by it He entered heaven, became King and Mediator, and that Offering perfects for ever those that are sanctified by Him, as the subjects of His Will. This is how the laws of God come to be written in the hearts of men; it is the Spirit that witnesses, takes Christ’s thoughts, and writes them in letters of golden love on the soul, and sin is pardoned and iniquities forgiven. The position is now changed; to those who are thus saved and sanctified, the Holiest Place, Heaven, is open; there is a new living Way of access to God; no priest may intervene, as more sacred than the worshipper; the eye of faith is fixed upon the one High Priest, the Son of God, the Heir of the House; the true heart can draw near to Him in the full assurance of faith; there is confidence, consideration, kindness, love, and good works,

and thus the new way of life is fully proved to be the way of return to God and of blessing to men. All this is true, but there is a possible shadow overhanging the fair scene : What if men should sin after such truths are known by them ? What if they sin with the will as moral creatures rejecting this sacrifice, then what sacrifice will be found anywhere that will take away sin ? It becomes a question of justice and judgment ; and how will the sinner escape from that fiery law that knows no mercy ? When men despised, or disobeyed, the laws given by Moses, and witnesses proved this immoral, rebellious spirit, the result was death without mercy. What will the punishment be upon those who despise the Son of God ; count the one true sacrifice for sin unholy ; and in their souls do despite to the gracious Spirit ? These are solemn questions ; they are not for children, or intellectual theorists, but for men reaching manhood and feeling its responsibilities. True the choice may not be pleasant or desirable, but the way is the way, and it is God's way ; therefore men are called to face these problems ; make their choice like men ; and having done so, patiently seek to do the Will of God in this world. It is strange that this problem should appear the same to Habbakuk, to the writer of this Epistle, to Martin Luther and to Christians in the twentieth century. " For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith ; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition : but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

WHEREUNTO has this realm of grace and mercy been working in the past, present, and future ; and what is that efficient power which produces such results ? The answer is summed up in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of this book, and the record is that of the ever recurring victories of faith all down the ages. Faith, What is it ? How can it be defined ? So that men may have a true concept of the reality ? Man hopes to obtain something promised ; something true and real ; and by the expression of his hope he reveals his faith. But this is to say that faith inspired the hope ; and thus the substance of the hope is faith in the one inspiring the hope. What evidence will satisfy man as to this faith which he cannot see, but which he hopes he will attain ? He has no evidence beyond this, the matter of fact that he possesses a hope ; that he has faith and trust in the one that inspired the



hope ; and he is taught by the Spirit to think of the Inspirer of that hope as God. Is there not in these few thoughts the germ seed, and the fruition of the Gospel ? God inspires by His Spirit into the soul of man a great hope ; when man awakens and asks what this hope is, he discovers the great truth, the mystery of grace, Christ in the soul, the hope of glory ; the evidence cannot be gained ; the man has faith ; he possesses a great hope, and by faith there is the patient waiting for the realisation. It is mysticism and mystery ; true, but there is just as much mysticism and mystery here as exists in all the realms of God. Men give such mysteries names ; and perhaps if the concept is God as immanent in the soul in Grace, Faith, Hope, Patience and Love, the idea may not be so far wrong ; the subjective corresponds to, and is, in harmony with, the objective Reality, God, and so the result reached is that by this means the gulf of sin, death, and hell is bridged over by God, and that the hope is made possible that mankind may be saved from sin. It is faith that gives the light of understanding as to creation, the necessity of self-sacrifice, and the fact that Grace and Life transcends death. It is by faith that there is preparation and salvation, spiritual obedience, the reception of great promises, the rejection of this world, with all its glories, and service for God in the great work of redemption. Faith is the great wonderworker in a thousand ways, and thus, whatever men believe as to the Word of God, experience as to His mercy, or endure in suffering, they are, to the extent that they conform to His Will, making manifest their faith in God ; and God by their faith. The record of the past in the Word of God is full of such examples of faith ; they surround men like a great cloud of interested witnesses, who are keenly watching all that is taking place ; and thus those who have entered for this race, to win the crown of life eternal, do well to run their race with patience and with earnestness. To Christians it is given to fix their gaze upon the great Example, surpassing in glory all others, even on " Jesus, the Author and finisher of faith ; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." It is not assumed that the way is pleasant ; or that the journey will be an easy one ; but rather that faith, and patience will be necessary ; and that even chastening and correction will be required. The past is to be used for

warning as well as encouragement ; for the earthly and the sensual are ever near, and the voice of the law is not easily subdued within the soul. Christians do not come by faith to these ; but by faith they look forward to the coming of Christ's kingdom, to the overthrow of all evil powers, and to the reception of that kingdom of grace and glory which cannot be moved.

WHITHER do all these things tend ? To brotherly love, to friendship and hospitality, to a pure and honourable life, to contentment and trust in God, to the faithful following of Christ, to love of truth, and to self-sacrifice for Christ's sake. The chief matter in this life is to follow Christ closely, and to seek to be with Him ; because here, in this life, there is nothing permanent and abiding ; therefore it is that which will abide and not change that is to be prized. The way may be hard, difficult, and full of trials ; but when hope and joy reign in the heart, it is wonderful what gladness, praise and thanksgiving may be offered to God on the great highway of life. Where such stories of the Divine goodness and grace are received, it will also be expected that the recipients will be beneficent with these heavenly gifts, and radiate forth kindness and goodness upon others walking in the same great highway. The spirit of dutiful obedience should be cherished toward those who are the faithful servants of Christ, and prayer offered to God so that His kingdom may come, and His Will be done upon the earth. The end of the vision is peace, the perfect life, and the doing of the Will of God through Christ, " to Whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen."

THE EPISTLES OF JAMES, PETER, JOHN AND JUDE.—In this series of Epistles this division of the Scriptures draws near an end. The writers are those who are personal witnesses and near friends of the Lord Christ, and thus their testimony as to the conceptions formed by them ought to be considered of great value by Christians. It is almost the last of the utterances in the sacred Word, and thus they give the ripest thoughts and experiences of those men whose lives had been spent in the service of Christ. These Epistles synchronise with the eighth Blessing, that of persecution, and the possession of the inheritance of the saints ; and the idea in the Bible, Nature and Man, is that of sacrifice, and the great conflict betwixt good and evil. It may be profitable in glancing over these Epistles to do so in the usual order by applying the questions in the method of Christ, and thus see whether they respond to the Divine ideal. If the question, WHENCE ? is set

before the Epistle of James, remembering that the question over them all is Whether ? then this Epistle takes as its key-note that dreaded word temptations. But the tone is completely changed ; the victory has been obtained ; and man, like a strong swimmer in a stormy sea, actually counts it a joy to meet with, and by faith and patience overcome, what was once the cause of death. It is unwavering faith in God that is all-powerful ; and by faith there is endurance, victory, and the crown of life. Temptation is not from God, but from the lusts of man ; thus from lust comes sin, and from sin death ; this is the Whence and Whither of evil. True religion is not in ceremonies or dogmas, but in the state of the heart ; in love to God, love to man, and in the pure life. It is the life that expresses the state of the heart, as in impartial kindness for brethren, in conforming to the royal law of love to all men, and in all good works. It is by the works that the inner life is justified, because these prove that where such fruits are found the tree and soil must be good. It is true that in the world evil abounds ; but the end is not yet ; patience is required, patient waiting, and long patience, for what is precious spiritual fruit. They are happy who are able to endure ; the patient are rich ; the truthful are strong ; and the prayerful are powerful. Whence all these good gifts ? They are from the Father through the Spirit ; and it is by them that man endures is strong, and overcomes evil.

WHEN did men obtain such gifts and blessings ? I. Peter : They come "according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." They come to those who are the children of God, who possess the living hope, in the living Christ ; that glorious inheritance, pure and eternal, preserved for the saved who are kept by the Spirit for the great day of manifestation. The promises, the trials of faith, and the salvation work of Christ, are all true ; there is suffering, and there is glory ; it is the great vision of life for angels and men, and they are the blessed ones who gird up their loins, and soberly and hopefully pursue their journey even to the end of the revelation of Christ. The life is to be in, and by, Christ, as the chief Corner-stone of the hopes of men ; and those who are in Him are chosen as royal priests, consecrated to His service and called out of the darkness into the marvellous light of God's truth.

WHY has God given to men such rich gifts and blessings ?

II. Peter: All men may possess the same precious faith, through Christ; His divine power is given for life and God-likeness; the precious promises contain and convey to the partakers the Divine nature, so that by the gifts and graces of the Spirit there may be fruitfulness in the life, and knowledge of Christ. It is the Word of God that gives light upon the pathway of life; by it evil is exposed and condemned; but the end shall be the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This is the work of the Spirit, in which there are many difficult problems, but it is for men to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

WHAT are the real gifts and blessings God bestows upon men?

I. John: In this Epistle there may be conceived to be a development of thought as compared with the revelation contained in the Gospel by the same writer. Christ is conceived as the "Word of Life"; and as that "Eternal Life" which was with the Father; and those that believe in and follow Him are all in one fellowship of life with the Father and the Son. The reality is Life, the gracious Life as the highest ideal; only, the life is made manifest by the light of Truth, and Truth is God, in Whom there is no darkness or sin. To walk in light is to walk spiritually; and it is by the truth revealed that there is cleansing from sin through the sacrifice of Christ. Sin is darkness as separation from the life in God, it is what is untrue and unrighteous; thus the way back to God is by sacrifice, the new life in Christ, and the knowledge of truth in the light of love. It is by love, in the light of truth, that the powers of evil are overthrown; they are as anti-Christ, because they would take the place of Christ and reign over men by those lusts which reign in the flesh, in the eyes, or through the pride of life. Love in Christ is God's highest gift to men; by it those who were children of darkness become the sons of God; but all that this means is not as yet understood, only this is believed, that when He appears then those who follow Him will be like Him, and they will see Him as He is. The realm of sin and the power of evil are not as yet destroyed; but in Christ the great victory is won, and the ultimate issue of the great conflict is no longer doubtful. To the apostle of grace, truth, and love, the revelation of God to men in Christ is that of Divine Love. God bestows His Love in Christ upon men; they believe in this love in Christ and they are filled with love; they love

God, they love Christ, the Ideal of all love ; they love one another, and thus they prove that they are the children of God by Divine Love. This is love as proved by obedience ; and through the obedience of love there is victory over evil, and the power that overcomes is faith in love. This is the God that is true, as revealed by the Eternal Love that is Divine. Lawlessness is sin, that which is contrary to the Will of God ; and sin is spiritual darkness, for the creature man is then diamagnetic to the Divine light of truth. Grace is Light radiant from heaven shining upon what is dark and dead ; and truth is the Divine Will as revealed in order or law ; order and law are spiritual verities, and it is by light in truth that moral law, or life, is made manifest. Life, the life of grace, overrules all other forms of life, and thus Grace, Light, Life, and Love are the great concept thoughts in the Kingdom of God. " We know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

How can men know that these things are true ? II. John : They must love in the truth ; they must know the truth ; they must be devoted to the truth for the sake of truth ; they must be the recipients of the truth in Christ in love ; and they must walk in the truth in the spirit of love. But what is this love that is said to be " a new commandment," but which men have possessed from the beginning ? It is practical life and love in the light of truth ; it is walking in that order, in all its fulness, which God has ordained as the true life of man. To sin is to transgress or break the laws of God, as great spiritual concepts ; as moral laws for life and duty ; as the psychic order of the soul ; and as the physical laws of nature. To do this is utter folly ; it is to love lies, to be deceitful, to be self-willed and self-assertive ; it is anti-Christ in a man or in masses of men ; and it is silly idolatry, because it is to worship the creature, so much lower than the moral, spiritual man in God's likeness. It is just at this point that men may discern, in every form of idolatry, their own perverted, degraded, features, as they take on the form of things or thoughts, beasts or devils ; and the lowest, most hideous, of all degradation is to take the prone earthly grovelling figure of the serpent with the flattened head, cunning wiliness, and the poisoned fangs that destroy through hatred, envy, strife, and jealousy. To transgress or reject the truth of Christ, His doc-

trine, is to lose God ; but to abide in His doctrine is to live in both Father and Son ; and the fulness of His doctrine is divine truth ; it is being brought spiritually face to face with the Spirit of Truth ; and in this experience there will come to men the fulness of the heavenly joy.

WHO are the true children of God in love ? III. John : They are known by their actions ; by their walk and conversation in the world ; and by that manhood which gives joy, gladness, and strength to their brethren. They are fellow-helpers in the truth and in love, and thus they are Christ-like in all that they do. Diotrophes and his brethren, those who love to have the pre-eminence ; who prate freely about the truth, but in the spirit of malice, of dogmatism, or for intense zeal for purity of doctrine, are ever causing strife, they ought not to be encouraged ; they do not love God ; the life of grace is perverted in them ; the truth of God is to them intellectualism, and thus they do not walk in truth and love in the Spirit of Christ. Demetrius and his brethren, even though they may not talk glibly about the truth, are to be loved and honoured ; the truth, as it radiates from their saint-like behaviour, makes a record of love in the souls of men ; and this is spiritual and divine, it is fellowship in the truth.

WHEREUNTO do these epistles of grace, love, and truth tend ? EPISTLE OF JUDE. They all speak " of the common salvation " revealed to the saints of God during the long day of redemption from evil through that faith in God which is so precious and worthy of acceptance and of defence. The Bible is a wonderful record of the grace and mercy of God on the one side, and of evil, justice, and judgment upon the other. Without the teaching of the Spirit who can tread its mazes of thought with perfect safety ? And without Christ as the light upon the page and within the soul to make the light of truth responsive and harmonious, how could men ever reach the truth as it is in Himself ? Men have been known to come into the family of God, the Church of Christ, and they have turned grace into licence, love into hatred, truth into error, and the life of self-sacrifice into self-glorying and self-assertion. They have by their words and deeds denied God and Christ, and thus perverted what was for blessing into the means of cursing. Men have been redeemed ; but, in perversity, many have not believed, they turned away from God and were destroyed. Angels fell from the light of truth, and the freedom of life and love, and they went into the darkness, to bondage

and to judgment. Men have given themselves up to sins of the flesh, they have corrupted themselves and fallen to be like brute beasts who know no moral law. Others have been proud, rebellious, jealous, greedy of gain, and thus departing from the fear of God they have been caught in the fierce storms of passion or the whirlpools of dark deeds. But these things have not happened by chance ; the evil seeds and the evil deeds were all fore-known, and Enoch the prophet told men of the judgments that would fall upon them because of their wickedness. All this is quite true, the ages of the prophets have told the same tale of evil-doing ; Christ and His apostles have testified to the same truth ; and history confirms all that the prophets, Christ, and His followers have said upon this subject of evil, and justice and judgment upon evil-doers. Those who have so acted have been sensual and without the conscious influence of the Holy Spirit. The life of the children of God has been that of growth in grace, building up of character in faith, prayer in the Spirit, and the desire to live in the atmosphere of love, ever looking for and patiently expecting God and mercy in Christ, as the life eternal. There are some who more easily find the way of life through the spirit of compassion and kindness ; but others require to be saved as by fear, with the greatest urgency, and with the spirit of intense repugnance to evil. Men cannot save themselves ; they cannot save one another ; it is Christ alone that saves by His Spirit of grace and truth. “ Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and for ever. Amen.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

This is the last book in the Written Word ; it is the last utterance of prophets, psalmists, the Christ, and apostles ; and thus it sums up " the Revelation of Jesus Christ " to the world. In the order of development as traced in the Bible this is conceived to be the twelfth series ; it is the spiritual in man reaching out to manhood in the spiritual regeneration, and the end is the New Jerusalem, the City of God, the River of Life ; the fruits of the trees fully ripened, and the end is joy, happiness, and the blessed life. The vision is that of spiritual moral manhood as attained in Christ ; with the conception, clearly realised, that apart from Christ there is no spiritual life worthy of the name ; that, in reality, Christ is Life and that all who live are alive in Him. It is not necessary to state that this book is, in its very nature and method of arrangement, in its signs and symbols, enigmatical ; it is not a plain practical treatise, or a historical work, or even a prophecy of history ; yet it contains a true Revelation, mysterious and mystical ; it is a true Word of God to men ; there is blessing with the reading and hearing and with the keeping of the words that are written in the book. The conceptions in the Revelation may point to a near future, at the time they were written ; they may be, in a sense, prophetic as to the Christian age ; or, it may be that they are not to be limited to one age, but to be taken as a Revelation in a special sense, and, in a definite form, as the consummation of the Word of God. In other words, men ought not to come to this book with strong pre-conceptions as to its meaning ; it is well to know that it is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and it is important to ask, and to receive, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as to the forms and the facts of the revelation. The expectations may be fairly directed in a definite direction ; that is to say, there is a faith and hope cherished, even by the con-



struction of the book, that this last word will have in it something of the all roundness of man's moral spiritual being ; thus gracious manhood, as a vision, may be expected, although it may not follow that men may understand the vision. It is not a discussion about doctrines, or dogmas, about order, or an inquiry into laws that is expected, but the vision of the seer who sees, and cannot doubt what he sees, though he may not understand what the visions mean. All this may seem mystical, and somewhat like the book ; but it is a fact that from the first perceptions of vision by the physical organs upwards, even to this revelation to the spirit of man by word symbols, the visions of God are all of the most complex kind. At this stage of thought, it may be found useful to consider, as briefly as possible, these visions of the seer at Patmos by the usual questions of inquiry by following the Method of Christ.

WHENCE the first vision and to whom ? It is from the Eternal ; from the Sevenfold Spirit of Wisdom ; and from Jesus Christ, Heaven's faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the King above all kings, with the blessings of grace and peace. Because He loved, saved, and cleansed men from their sins by His death and made them kings and priests in His Kingdom, they ascribe to Him all glory and dominion. He is coming again ; all shall see Him ; those who caused His death will perceive their fatal mistake ; and all nations shall express their grief because of Him and His revelation. Christ is, was, and is to come ; He fills and fulfils all ; and His Name was the Almighty. These are voices revealing Christ ; they have no form ; they are great spiritual concepts which men find around them, and within their own souls ; they are not for discussion ; they lie behind, above, and beyond, the thoughts of men ; they are to be pondered upon in the heart, and not limited or confined to idol forms in words or dogmas of any kind. Men may now listen to the seer in the island of Patmos, a brother, and companion in that kingdom of patience and trouble, who has been a witness for Christ in the world. This man was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day," he heard a great voice, that of Christ, commanding him to write in a book what he saw, and to send the same to the seven churches in Asia. Turning in response to the Voice he saw in the sevenfold light of truth the Son of Man in glorified form ; in His right hand were seven stars, and coming out of His mouth a sharp two-edged sword ; whilst His face shone with the radiant glory of the sun.

The vision was too much for mortal man ; the seer fell down as dead at Christ's feet, to be raised again by His right hand of power, with comforting words ; and the explanation of what the stars and the candlesticks mean. The stars are the ministers in the seven churches ; and the candlesticks are the churches in which these servants of Christ minister. These are the thoughts that lie at the root of this Book of Revelation ; they reveal God, the Eternal ; the Divine Spirit in perfect Wisdom ; the Lord Christ, the Saviour of men from their sins ; and that mystical Church in its many branches and methods of service which were in Him even when known as the Almighty, as Jehovah, or as the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world, and the King over all kings on the earth. Were he to reveal Himself in His glory, who could dare to look upon His face ? Even the symbol signs are too much for men ; they see the words, but they do not perceive the glory that is in them ; they can only see that Christ is all-glorious ; and that no one can be compared with Him, because every symbol used fails to reveal His spiritual glory.

WHEN Christ is pleased to reveal Himself to men, then in what way is this done ? It is through the vision of the seer ; and unto His spiritual servants in His churches. It is necessary to observe here that these messages are to individual churches, and not specially to the Church as a unity. Just as the Spirit of perfect wisdom may be represented as Seven Spirits, so the Church may have many divisions, and each division is a true Church of Christ ; there is, however, this remarkable fact, as brought out in these messages to the Churches, these are all imperfect ; Christ is in each one in a special sense, or a particular way, and they are encouraged and warned according to their conditions and their actions. They are subject to conditions, to environments, and to developments ; He is in them all ; it is His spiritual presence that constitutes the true Church ; and, without Him they would not be Churches of Christ. This truth is one that ought to be remembered ; it is fundamental ; the Church that exalts and glorifies Christ and His Kingdom, and forgets, or will not even claim to be a Church of Christ in truth, is a true Church of Christ ; but the Church that exalts its own organisation, and glorifies its members, is more likely to be a synagogue of Satan in hatred and strife than a Church of the Living God. It will be remembered that one of the laws of the Method of Christ found throughout the Scriptures is that the

first of a series in every new development embraces, or has involved in it, all that follows in the series ; they are as a development from the seed-thought ; and the eighth is the seed as reproduced from the germ-seed. The message to the Church at Ephesus embodies in it the vision of the glorified Christ ; in His right hand is perfect power, and He walks in perfect wisdom, knowing the works, labour, patience, and the detestation of what is evil, in the members of the Church at Ephesus. It is by His power, and in the light of His truth that they had tried and tested those who claim apostolic preference and dignity, and found them to be even liars by such self-assertion. Those who had been self-sacrificing, patient, and had laboured for Christ's sake without fainting, had proved themselves to be, whether they claimed it or not, in the true apostolic succession, for they were the imitators and servants of Christ in the world. This Church is not perfect ; the first ardour of love is gone ; there is a fall from grace ; and, unless there is repentance, the light will be removed and the issue will be darkness. To those who hear the voice of the Spirit, the promise is that of life from the Tree of Life that is in the Paradise of God. To the Church in Smyrna the message is from the First and Last ; the Risen Saviour, the Lord of Life. This Church in the midst of poverty and trouble had become rich in good works. They had strong enemies who could glory in their wealth and power ; they could bring sorrow and suffering upon Christ's followers ; but the power to cause trouble, and the extent of the suffering, were limited ; thus the encouragement is to faithfulness, and the promised reward the Crown of Life. The voice of the Spirit proclaims this great truth, that those who overcome in the grace and life of Christ, upon them the second death can have no power. To the Church at Pergamos the message is from the Lord of spiritual truth, the holder of that sharp sword which has two edges. Here the servants of Christ live near the stronghold of Satan ; yet they had been found faithful ; they had clung to the name of Christ ; and they had witnessed the death of the faithful martyr Antipas. But they were not perfect in spiritual thought or worship ; there was a tendency to follow that wicked Balaam, who could speak what is true, but at the same time was so morally depraved as to give evil counsel that led to idolatry and death. This is a grievous sin ; it may be diplomacy, but it is deceit, double-mindedness, and devilment, for the simple reason that it is

contrary to righteousness and manhood ; that man is like the serpent, the type of cunning, who can coolly, whilst knowing what is true and right, advise what is contrary to truth and righteousness. The advice given is to repentance ; or the result will be punishment with that sword which is double-edged. The voice of the Spirit proclaims this truth, that those who overcome in this struggle, as betwixt truth and error, righteousness and wickedness, they will eat of the manna that cannot be seen, the angel's food ; and upon the pure cleansed spirit there will be written the Divine Name. The message to the Church at Thyatira is from the " Son of God," the Discerner of Spirits, the Immutable. He sees in this Church love, service, faith, and good works ; but the good works exceed the love, and this is a blemish ; the atmosphere has become poisoned as with a spirit of zealous earnestness ; the glory of this Church is in works of which men may boast ; the life of love in Christ is ebbing away ; and Christ sees Jezebel, seduction, idolatry, and fornication of a spiritual kind that is detestable. This special perversion of the Christian religion is one that has had long space for repentance ; it is one known to all religions ; the original Jezebel was zealous for works ; Jehu boasted of his zeal in the same cause ; the Jews were zealous in good works ; and many Christians seem to think that religion is good works. This is wrong ; the conception is not Christian ; the children of this family cannot live with the children of grace by faith ; and, unless there is repentance, the children must die in the desert, for they cannot enter the land of promise. The Lord sees and searches every heart ; and according to the works so is the reward ; the good works of grace and faith are not the same good works as those which are perverted from grace, and are heathenish. There are to be found great depths in the wiles of Satan in this matter ; the evil one will let men befool themselves to any extent ; he knows well, none better, the distinction betwixt the zealous good works of men, and the faithful, loving keeping of Christ's Word and good works ; the spirit is different, and it is the Spirit of Christ that is all important in His own realm of grace. To those that overcome, in the Spirit of Christ, there is promised power to overthrow nations ; power to rule in righteousness ; and power to conquer and destroy the realms of evil. This power Christ received from His Father ; and thus by the Spirit it becomes the gift of Christ to all the sons of God. The gift from Christ, as a

symbol, is very beautiful ; for it is Himself, as the bright morning star of hope that precedes the coming day. The message to the Church at Sardis is from the Lord of perfect wisdom and truth ; and, strange to relate, the message is to an almost dead Church, possessing only the name of being alive. There are traces of life discernible, but the Church is on the verge of death ; and thus the works are imperfect before God. The counsel is to remember, hold fast, and repent ; for the hour of coming, and of judgment, may be very near. To those that overcome there will be given the gift of purity, of white raiment, made white by the perfect sacrifice ; their names will be written in the Book of Life, and Christ will confess their names in heaven. The message to the Church at Philadelphia is from the Holy One, the Truth, the Possessor of the key of all mysteries ; the Revealer of truth, and the One who can close up the doorways of true knowledge. He has set before this Church an open door that men cannot shut ; and because they possess a little strength, have been found faithful confessors, He will cause it to be made manifest to their enemies that they have received the Divine love. In patience they had kept the Word of faith and hope in the time of trial ; and they would be kept in that hour of temptation, which would come upon the earth. The coming is now very near ; it is the dark hour before the dawn ; and it is death, or the Crown of Life, that is now the solemn choice of the faithful. To those who overcome, the promise is eternal stability ; to be a pillar in God's temple ; or to be built upon the Rock Christ ; it is to have the Name of God, and of Heaven, and of Christ, written upon the heart and soul ; and what is all this but the divine life in the image of God and the likeness of Christ, as it may be conceived in the vision of the method of Christ. The message to the Church at Laodicea is from " the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." In other words, this is the Christ, as the consummation of all things ; the truth in perfect scientific order ; and the Image, the Ideal, the Arch-type of all being. This is what men are beginning to think Christ must be ; and lo ! the revelation is 2,000 years old ; for it was sent to this Church at Laodicea and the people who received it did not know what it meant. What was the state of this Church ? Upon its brow there is written the words callous indifference ; it is not hot with zeal of any kind ; it is not so cold as to destroy life ; it is in a detestable condition, neither hot nor cold, only fit to be used to cause vomiting ; men

call this a Church of Christ, but as a power for spiritual life it is utterly unworthy of the name. Thus Christ with His scientific measurements of order and law, life and blessing, looks upon and measures this strange Church. What are its own measurements as to its condition ? It is a rich Church, with ample funds ; it is generously endowed with worldly goods ; it is satisfied spiritually and it requires nothing from God. Did men ever see such a Church as this ; or is it anything like what people know about the Church ? To complete the picture might not the addition of insatiable avarice, and covetousness, be added ; a wealthy Church never satisfied with worldly possessions ? The Church boasts of wealth and greatness, and cannot hear the Divine Voice in pity and pain saying, thou “ knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked.” Was there ever found such a contra-distinction in values ; the Lord despising all that the Church values ; and the Church so blind and ignorant as not to see, know, or understand, what is true wealth and spiritual power in Christ. The Lord counsels the purchase of the gold of grace, tested in the fires of sorrow and self-sacrifice ; His own righteousness, which will clothe the naked and remove shame ; and the anointing of the Spirit, so that the vision may be true to spiritual facts. Did ever men hear of such love, pity, patience, and kindness as this ? Even to the lukewarm, the proud and the ambitious, He speaks of love, gentle rebuke, and chastisement. Where is the zeal and repentance in response to such love and patience ? He is actually at the door, knocking, standing, waiting ; and the Church in her members are deaf ; they hear neither His Voice nor the knocks so strong and oft-repeated. What will the result be ? Continued deafness and blindness, and the sad departure of the loving, patient Saviour and Lord ; or, the open heart, the open door, and that fellowship and communion in the Spirit that will be the perfect revelation of the Lord of suffering and of glory ? The promise to those who hear, see, obey, overcome, is the Kingdom of God, and the glory of heaven. “ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.”

WHY did Christ give to men such a revelation of His grace and love ? Why indeed ? Truly men may express their wonder and astonishment that He could so love, and be so patient with, those so utterly unworthy of His pity, compassion and mercy. With the WHY of the revelations of God there is always the work of the gracious Spirit ; and the Spirit takes what is the ideal in

Christ, and tries to lead men to understand the will, the purposes, and the designs of God for the salvation of men from evil. The difficulty here is to see what the Spirit would show ; and yet the Voice is heard saying, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." The secret of the mystery, and the mystery of the secret, is to be in the Spirit ; this is all men require, but what an ALL is thus suggested ; thought and language fail ; the door is open and heaven is there, but the Vision is not translatable ; the earthly forms surround the heavenly concepts ; and they will not be born and live apart from the Divine symbols that surround Christ in His glory. If, for example, the vision of the Throne, the Rainbow, the twenty-four elders, the seven lamps of fire, the sea of glass, the living creature full of eyes, the lion, the calf, the man and eagle, the wings with their eyes, and that voice of praise to the Eternal, were translated into human thought, would they represent the power of God, faithfulness, the work of redemption, the wisdom of the Spirit, the plans, purposes and Divine knowledge and Omniscience of the Spirit, the faith, hope, patience and love of the Spirit, and the whole universe vocal with the honour, praise, glory and power of God ? It is not criticism, or comparison that seems to be wanted here ; it is just to fall down before the Vision and let it permeate the being until the Spirit can set the soul in order, so that the Vision may be seen, as it ought to be, "in the Spirit." He is worthy of all glory, honour and power ; the difficulty is not in perceiving that this must be so ; rather it is the utter unfitness of sinful men to conceive, and express, His glory. He is Creator of all that exists ; it is by His pleasure that they exist ; the painful part in the story is that men have not lived for His pleasure but their own, -and thus the perversion of the order of creation known as sin. Why men should have acted this utterly foolish part of sinning against God and seeking for pleasure in their own selfish, self-asserting fashion, is a great mystery ; they would seek after the open eyes, and the knowledge of good and evil ; but little did they think that they were taking the very path that led to darkness, ignorance, sin and death. They would open the sealed treasures of Divine wisdom by the power of their own right hands, and by their cunning and skill ; but, when they made the effort it was all in vain ; what they thought was simple and easy to be understood, was sealed, and no man could be found worthy to open the book and unloose the seals of

the sevenfold perfect wisdom of God. This is a vision that extends backward into the ages beyond Patmos and Mosaism ; and many men have wept much because they could not open and read this Book of God, and were unworthy to look upon the pages. There is only One worthy and able to undertake this Divine Mission ; He possesses Royal power ; He is the Source of all power and wisdom, and thus He alone has prevailed by Divine power to open the book, and unloose the seven seals. The Divine Power is revealed to men in a strange form ; in vision it is a Lamb, as Sacrifice, in the midst of men, but that Lamb possesses perfect power, the perfect vision of truth, and perfect wisdom as the means of salvation and blessing to all men. He received the Book out of the right hand of Almighty God, and when He had so done, then the Spirit of God, and of mankind by the Spirit, sang that new song of redemption which is the theme of all ages and nations. When the Lamb opened the first seal there was movement, noise, as of thunder with power, and the Voice of the Spirit said " Come and see." What was to be seen was a white horse, a rider with a bow, a crowned King, and he went forth conquering. When the second seal was opened then there was seen a red horse, the rider had power to make war, he had a great sword and those who followed him killed one another. When the third seal was opened there was seen a black horse ; the rider on this horse had a pair of balances in his hand and a voice said, from the Spirit, " a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." When the fourth seal was opened there came forth a pale horse ; his rider was Death, and Hell was his follower. To Death was given power to kill one-fourth of the people on the earth with the sword, hunger, death and wild beasts. When the fifth seal was opened, then there was revealed the great altar of sacrifice, and the souls of the martyrs who had been true and faithful to God and His Word. They were impatient ; and they cried out in their sore trouble that their enemies might be judged and punished. They received the pure white robe of Christ's righteousness ; and they entered into rest until the killing time would be past. When the sixth seal was opened, there was an earthquake ; the sun became black, the moon became blood-red ; the stars fell as if a strong wind had shaken them ; the heaven was rolled up as a scroll ; mountains and islands were moved ; kings, great men, rich men, captains, bond and free, hid themselves in dens and



rocks, and called upon the rocks to fall upon them, so that they might hide from the face of the Lamb, in His day of wrath; for that day had come upon them, and who could stand in His presence? These are the visions, in the Spirit, which reveal what is spiritual; in Heaven the glorified Christ; the Spirit with mystical power and wisdom; the redeemed in glory in their representatives; the Spirit ascribing glory, honour and thanks to Christ, the Eternal King; and the saints, the elders, worshipping and ascribing glory, honour and power to the Creator. There follows the revelation of the book of mystery which no man could open and untie the Seven Seals; but, which the Redeemer, the Lamb of God, could open; and because He is worthy to do this for men, to Him, and to Him alone is ascribed all the power, riches, wisdom, strength honour, glory, and blessing of the great work of redemption. To all this the reply of the Spirit is, Amen. And the saints worship Him that is Life, who died for men, and who ever liveth in glory. It is the Lamb that opens the mystic seals of the mysterious book; and, it is clearly seen that the vision is changed from heaven to earth; from that of glory to where there is sin and shame. What the symbols mean, it is not necessary to consider at the present time; what men may see by the spiritual vision is a kind of development with which they are familiar in history. The first vision is the white horse and his rider going forth conquering; the Prince of Peace, the Lord of Lords, as in the story of Eden; the world of creation to be subdued by man for men. The second vision has changed the whole outlook; that red horse and the rider mean war, hatred, strife, contention, murder. The third vision, the black horse with the rider, mean darkness, ignorance, suspicion, jealousy, covetousness, and want; the curse rests upon all the blessings of God, so rich and bountiful to men; but in their wickedness men are limited to their actions; they must not hurt or destroy the consecrating oil of the work of the Spirit, or the glad tidings of salvation for sinful men. The fourth vision, the pale horse, death and hell point to the fearful consequences of sin; they are dread, terrible powers, but they are not supreme; they reign over and destroy, not all the works of God, but a fourth, the physical order of the visible world. The fifth vision, is that of a new order; the altar of mercy and sacrifice is set up upon the earth, and the fierce struggle of the ages is in a state of progress; it is ever in this fifth realm, that of the intellect, that such struggles take place;

it is the brutal work of those who think they know, who have usurped power, and will compel men to obey what is evil; it is men who boast of their freedom, power and glory, compelling those who have no wealth or power, to resign freedom, to accept the claims of bondage, or die the martyr's death. The sixth vision brings men into the realm of justice and judgment; God intervenes at last, and a day of wrath is come upon the sons of men. The whole vision is spiritual and ideal; it might have been written in the Spirit by Enoch, Noah, or Isaiah; this is like the work of the Spirit of God in that realm of mystic thought man cannot understand; it was written when it was, because at that period in history the Spirit was giving to men, in a form they could appreciate, a revelation of His works of glory, mercy, and of judgment.

WHAT is the vision of Revelation, as to the mystery of Salvation? It is conceived as if the earth lay four square, and at each corner there stood an angel watcher, the servant of God, to watch, defend, or to destroy. The earth is in their charge and to the Lord of angels they must give an account of their service. A fifth angel is seen as coming from the sun, as it rises upon the realm of darkness, carrying the seal of God, and the command is given to restrain the storm until the sealing of the redeemed was effected. In Israel there was so sealed 12,000 of each tribe; in other words twelve times twelve, the full mystical perfect number of the Kingdom of God. But the mercy of God extends beyond Israel even to all nations and peoples, for the redeemed, purified victors over the powers of evil cannot be numbered, and they all worship God, and ascribe the glory of Salvation to the Lamb. Who are these worshippers clad in their robes of purest white? They are the saved who have passed through great trouble; redeemed by that sacrifice offered on Calvary; and now being pure of heart they serve God continually in His temple; they drink from the living fountains, and they have no sorrow, sighing or tears. Thus the vision changes from the earth to heaven; from trouble and sorrow to paradise, and this vision has been a vision of blessing, hope and peace to many. With the opening of the seventh seal of the book; there was, as it were, silence in the heavens; there was a long pause; the creation, angels and men were silent; something inconceivable was taking place and no voice could be heard throughout the universe. This must be so; it is here that the mystery of all mysteries is to be found; it is the seventh,

the Christ, the New Creation in Grace, that cannot be named, or described, that is to enter the arena of history. How is He to appear in this mystic vision ? To the seer it was given to see seven angels who received seven trumpets ; and then there appeared the High Priest Angel at the altar of incense ; the Mediator through whom the prayers of all the saints ascend before God. The censer was filled with fire from the altar ; it was cast upon the earth, and the result was voices, thunder, lightning and an earthquake. He came not to bring peace, but war, and the sword and fire ; and as He went about among men, He knew that these had already come ; the fire was kindled, and the terrible hour of straitness environed Him. The angels prepared to sound their trumpets, and the first judgment fell upon the earth, like hail and fire mingled with blood. When the second angel sounded there was the appearance of a fiery mountain cast into the sea ; the third part became blood ; a third part of the living died ; and a third of the ships were destroyed. When the third angel sounded there was seen as if a great star fell out of heaven burning as it fell, and it turned a third of the rivers and fountains into wormwood, causing death because of the bitterness. When the fourth angel sounded ; then the third part of sun, moon and stars were smitten with darkness ; and an angel warned men of the woes that were to come upon them because of the voices of the remaining trumpets. When the fifth angel sounded ; there fell from heaven to earth a star ; and to this star, angel, being, there was given the key of the pit of hell ; he opened the door ; there was seen, as it were, the smoke of a furnace, and the smoke darkened the sun and the air ; from the same horrible place there came locusts with power like scorpions ; these did not hurt grass nor tree, only the godless who were not sealed with the seal of God ; they caused great torment for a limited time ; they had a king over them, even the angel of hell and his name in the English tongue is the Destroyer. This is one of the great woes coming upon men, but there remains two more which they have to endure because of their sins. When the sixth angel sounded there came a voice from the horns of the golden altar commanding that sixth angel to loosen the four angels that had been bound in the river Euphrates. These were set free under careful limitations as to time, and their armies which went forth to slay mankind were almost innumerable. Their armies were very terrible in appearance and in power and they killed in their campaigns

one-third of mankind. But those who remained, saved from these plagues, did not repent of their evil ways ; they continued to be idolaters, thieves, sorcerers and murderers. The vision is changed from earth to heaven ; the mighty Angel of God is seen clothed as with a cloud with the rainbow crown of glory round His head ; His face is glorious as the sun and His feet like pillars of fire. He descended in majesty to the earth, one foot He placed on the sea and the other on the earth ; He uttered His voice and the earth trembled ; and after His utterance seven thunders spake, but what they said was not written by the seer. This great angel is the Lord of time ; by Him it exists and at His word it will be brought to an end. In the days when the seventh angel begins to sound, then the mystery of God will be ended, even as foretold by the prophets. The voice from heaven told the seer to take the little book out of the hand of the Angel ; he asked for it and was told to take and eat it up and the experience from it would be bitterness, whilst in the mouth it would taste sweet as honey. This Book must be the Divine Word, as received from the Angel of the Word, and it is given to men that they may prophesy before all the nations. The vision is again changed, and the place seen is Jerusalem. The seer is instructed to measure the temple, altar, and the people that worship therein ; but not the outer court, because this was to be given up to the Gentiles to tread it under foot for forty-two months. During this period power would be given to the two witnesses to the truth of God who would prophesy in mourning ; these two witnesses are two olive trees and two candlesticks, in fact, the means of grace, light and life, to men during this period of great darkness in the earth. These witnesses are Divine powers ; if men try to hurt them they have power to kill by fire ; they have power to prevent the blessing of rain ; they have power to turn pure water into blood, and to smite the earth with plagues. But they are witnesses-bearers for a time only ; when they have finished their testimony the end will be that the beast from hell will make war against them, and they will be overcome and killed. This will take place in that Sodom given up to wickedness, in that Egypt that glories in power ; and in that very place where the Lord was crucified. This thing will not be done in a corner of the earth ; it will be known to all the nations, that what was once honoured, as the Word of God, as His witnesses, are dead and dishonoured : that no grave can be found for them ; that they are trampled

under the feet of men ; and that fools rejoice and make themselves merry over their jokes, because the enemies they feared, and who tormented them, were dead. That is not the end of the witnesses ; at the time appointed, the Spirit of Life entered into them ; they stood before men in resurrection glory ; and, like their Lord, they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld this miracle of a spiritual resurrection and they were afraid. These things, with a great earthquake, the fall of the tenth of the city, and the death of thousands caused those who remained to be afraid, and they gave glory to the God of heaven. " The second woe is past, and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly." When the seventh angel sounded, then great voices were heard in heaven ; and the news was that a great revolution had taken place for the kingdoms of this world had become the realm of Christ, and that kingdom had been at last instituted which would stand for ever. To the redeemed this was glad tidings indeed ; the elders in glory fell on their faces worshipping and thanking God the Eternal, because He had resumed His power to reign and had put down that reign of corruption and wickedness that had prevailed upon the earth. The temple of God upon earth had vanished and the temple in heaven was seen to be open ; the ark of the Testament was seen in the Holiest Place and in the midst of storms, and of an earthquake the visible disappeared and the spiritual was revealed. It is not easy to discern what all these things mean, or into what part of history they may find a spiritual setting. It has to be remembered that the realm of thought is that fourth series which is the very heart of psychic mystery ; it is the soul of Nature and the heart of man ; it is where truth and righteousness are blessed ; and it is where self-sacrificing Divine Love is revealed by the Spirit. As the opposites of these there is manifested the powers of evil regnant, the just judgments of God upon evildoers, and at last the downfall of the empire of evil upon the earth. The visions, as a series, fitly open with the ideal of that Paradise of God where the redeemed are safe, pure, and happy. There follows the vision of the seven angels and the trumpets ; the Lord of Angels intervening as the Mediator and High Priest over the House of God at the golden altar ; then follow in their order, judgments upon the earth ; upon the sea and that which lives ; upon the rivers and fountains of life psychic, with that strange bitterness as of wormwood which destroys life at its springs ;

upon sun, moon, and stars causing night, darkness, and ignorance. All these are, as it were, the common empiric experiences of life with its judgments; but when the fifth angel sounded, then the star of the intellect falls as from heaven to earth; hell is let loose upon men, and the king of this realm upon the earth is that adversary of God and righteousness, well-named the Destroyer. The sixth angel leads the thoughts to the valley of the Euphrates, to Nineveh and Babylon, and the thought comes that these terrible powers were not merely God-sent scourges upon the surrounding nations, but mutually destructive, utterly immoral and merciless. However this may be, it is well to remember that such signs may not be limited to one dispensation of grace; they are the forms of development inherent in what is evil; and such results intellectually and morally are what the seer could predict under the teaching of the Spirit. Following these dire calamities there comes the vision of the Divine Angel and the Book; and it will be remembered that in the Jewish dispensation at the Restoration under Ezra, the problem is the Word of God; and in the Christian dispensation after the horrible wars of Roman Empire, Papacy, and Mohammedanism, the theme of history is the Bible and the Reformation as a means for the extension of the Word of God among the nations. The measuring of the temple may sum up Judaism; but it would appear as if the two witnesses are the Word of God, and the events in modern times seem to point strongly in that direction. The great events following the sounding of the seventh trumpet are yet to come; men are anxiously looking for the coming kingdom of truth, righteousness and peace; and when the temple of God is seen to be open, the spiritual thoughts of God made manifest, and Christ glorified, then men may lift up their heads and sing for joy, because Christ will be manifested and "He shall reign for ever and ever."

How, or under what form of symbolism, or similitude of thought, can men conceive the kingdom of Grace upon the earth, the Christ Child, and that Church of Christ which is His glory? It is as a great sign or wonder in heaven; and it is like a woman clothed with light as glorious as the sun; beneath her feet there is seen the pale reflecting moon, and around her head, as her crown, a galaxy of the brightest stars. This woman, as it were, conceived the Divine Christ; she travailed in birth pains and the Child was about to be born. This is the realm, the House of

Grace ; here the Divine love was conceived, and this Child-King of Grace was about to be born into this world where the foul serpent, the hideous dragon of power and passion held supreme rule. This also is another sign of wonder ; but the beast is too horrible to describe ; he is a monster with seven heads, ten horns upon his heads and seven crowns upon his seven heads. The power of this beast cannot be questioned ; with one sweep of its tail it brought down to earth one-third of the stars ; and this was the beast that was waiting to devour the Divine Child as soon as He was born. This Man-Child was destined by Heaven to be the Ruler over all nations ; thus the jealousy of the beast because this meant loss of power, precedence and glory ; and thus the Child must be destroyed. This Child was born ; this Child cannot die ; He ascended up to God and to the throne of the universe. The woman fled from this fierce beast into the great desert and there she was preserved for that mystic period of 1,260 days. There was war in the spiritual world ; the Prince Michael—the one like God—and His angels, against the beast, and his angels ; the devil, the old serpent was cast down from the spiritual heaven to the sensual earth, and the sons of God rejoiced in heaven, for they saw that salvation and the kingdom of God had come, by the power of Christ, and the accuser was cast down, and his cursed power taken from him. The redeemed knew well that in themselves there was no power to redeem from the hand of that fierce enemy ; the victory came through the blood of self-sacrifice, and by the Word of God ; and those who rejoiced in this victory devoted their lives to the service of their Lord and Saviour. The woman was persecuted, but not destroyed ; she found protection in the wilderness for the allotted time of trouble ; but the dragon continued the struggle and made war with her seed, those who keep God's Commandments and keep the words of Jesus Christ. This is the realm of good and evil ; that enchanting land of promise which was promised by the serpent in Eden. It is time for men to have their eyes opened, so that they may gaze upon this monster of evil, and try to understand in what way the devil fulfils his promises. He has become lord over a wide realm ; he has emerged from the great sea of humanity, and there he stands before men the object of dread horror, because of his seven heads of perfect devilment, and his horns and crowns with all their power and pride, selfishness and self-glorying. God help poor mortals who fall into the

power of this cruel fierce beast, for assuredly, apart from Christ, they are utterly defenceless and cannot help themselves. He has a history worthy of study ; one of his heads was wounded to death in his conflict with Michael ; but a head more or less is as nothing to this beast, because every head lives, and every head has its own realm of power and dominion. The audacity of the beast is noticeable ; he will be worshipped as God, and those who worship and adore, say, " Who is like unto the beast ? Who is able to make war with him ? " A notable beast full of boasting and of blasphemy ; and yet the creature is only a creature of God, permitted to use power for a definite time, allowed to make manifest his evil deeds as regnant over men upon the earth. Evil-doers will worship this monster of iniquity ; but the redeemed whose names are written, from the foundation of the world, in the Lamb's book of life, cannot thus defile themselves by worshipping such a monster. Is all this true in spiritual verity ? " If any man have an ear let him hear." This is not mere playing with words as counters ; these are all facts in the spiritual world. Do men love to lead, or be as a slaves led, into captivity, then into captivity they shall go ; do they wish to kill with the sword, then let them remember that those who take the sword perish by the sword. These are wise sayings ; men have proved them to be true ; it is order and law, cause and effect. What does the devil say to such things ? Even that his slavery and chains are perfect freedom ; and that by the sword men will win for themselves glory, honour, and power. The base liar, when did he ever speak the truth righteously ? He is the great deceiver, and men are fools to trust his word. How then must men act in such a world where the truth may seem to be a lie, and a base lie the truth ? There is no solution but this ; fear God, love Christ, and wait for the guidance of the Spirit. " Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." But there is another beast that arises out of the earth, and it is earthly and not spiritual ; this is a hybrid counterfeit kind of beast, for he has the appearance of a lamb with two horns ; but he speaks with the harsh voice of the dragon beast. What is this beast, and, how is it that he turns up among men in this strange guise ? He is the coadjutor of that other earthly beast, and its supporter. He is a miracle worker and plays with spiritual fire ; saying that he can bring it down from heaven upon men. He is the arch deceiver ; a base idolater, and an inciter to idolatry ; he adores the beast



and its ways, and will even seek to kill those who will not worship the image of the earthly beast. A most relentless, determined, powerful, what men would say an infallible kind of beast, as to his conceptions of what is true, and what men must do ; for rich and poor, bond and free, are all compelled to receive the idolatrous mark of the beast in hand or forehead ; in fact, in this world there is no room for any who dare to think, or speak, differently from the beast ; they are outlawed and not permitted to buy or sell, to assert liberty of thought, or freedom of speech : the first beast is brutal with his power, and insatiate with desire for glory ; but this second beast has all the cunning of the serpent, the pride and power of the beast, and the cruel subtlety of the devil. What can this beast be ? How can men discover what this means ? "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast : for it is the number of a man ; and his number is six hundred, threescore and six." In this portion of this wonderful book, there seems to be focussed into this very brief record a marvellous conception, in signs, of the true Church of Christ, and its marvellous preservation by the Divine Grace upon the earth. The spiritual glory of this gracious queen of heaven is most fitly symbolised as the ideal above sun, moon and stars, above the moral realm, the intellectual world and all psychic realms of thoughts ; their true position in their ideals is that of the crown adorning the head ; it is Grace that reigns and these are the diadems in her crown. It is out of this Divine ideal that the Christ is born ; the Child of the Woman is the Lord of the Universe. How subtle and beautiful the symbolism that teaches His gracious condescension in thus humbling Himself to be born, and how fitting and full the one thought, passing by all earthly experiences of the Child as caught up unto God and the throne of glory, there to reign over all nations. The spiritual conflict of the ages and the victory in the spiritual world cannot be misunderstood, and the desert experiences and deadly persecution of the people of God by the beast because of their faithfulness to God, Christ and conscience is branded into history, never to be erased. Of these two beasts much has been written, and said, and doubtless much remains to be uttered upon this subject. They are powers dreadful and deadly ; they have a veritable existence ; they have manifested the wickedness of men, and the deadly virility of sin. The horrible picture to the imagination is the "man of sin" in another

form ; in fact it is fallen manhood in the form of dragon and beast, immoral, depraved, proud, powerful, merciless and murderous, without a sign of grace, pity, compassion or love. The concrete thing is there to be studied, it is the hideous devil that has been the destroyer throughout the ages ; it is proud, God-defying conceited intellectualism, moralism as in despotic governments, and false religion supporting states and imperialism, ever grovelling in the earth, drunk with sensual pleasures, and with despotic cruel power, crushing the masses of men into bondage and beastliness. But let men beware lest they carry this symbolism in directions they ought not to do ; it does not appear as if men are permitted, as individuals, to turn the light of their puny lamps upon other men and say that they are represented by this vision in revelation, rather let every man judge himself, consider his own most complex nature, see how possible it is that within his own soul this devil of sin might show his beastly flat serpent head ; and, above all things, remember, that apart from the grace, mercy and blessing of God, through Christ, the Saviour, that cursed beast would most certainly degrade the man into a beast with all the hideous features of this "man of sin."

Who is this blessed Redeemer so good, powerful and most pitiful and gracious ? "I looked, and, lo ! a Lamb stood on Mount Sion, and with Him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having His Father's Name written on their foreheads." The vision is heaven, and music, and singing, and a special song which no one could learn but the redeemed. Even this brief glance into the holiest place carries with it a pang of pain ; this is not a place for poor sinning mortals, how could they appear in such company, or be made fit to follow the Blessed Lamb ? How strange are spiritual antagonisms ; this vision of heaven to the saint creates the desire to be there, the feeling of utter unfitness to be there, and the hope that somehow that home will be reached at last ; but, to the sinful beast what would such a vision mean, but remorse, despair and the place of torment. How true the thought must be that what men are, is heaven or hell ; it is not environment that counts in the issues of things, but what the man is as in the likeness of the beast, or as in the likeness of Christ, in the image of God. Here is emphasised the thought that God willeth not the death of any, but that men turn from their evil ways, and listen to that angel flying in the midst of heaven, carrying onward, and preaching the everlasting

gospel of glad tidings to all men in all nations. Is it not most reasonable that men should "fear God and give glory to Him." He has been patient but the hour of judgment will surely come. Even now men who have the spiritual ear, and can hear the angel's voice, can discern the sound, resounding in the air in the sentence that has gone forth. Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wealth of her fornication. A third angel follows to warn men of their danger, because if they are found to be worshippers of this beast, and marked with the idol mark, then their doom will be that of the beast, and the punishment the same. This is pre-vision, warning; to the wicked it may have no meaning for they see no danger; but to the saints of God it is a sign on the great highway of life; it is where they dwell in the spirit of patience, the light of faith shines clearly, and Christ can be seen, for He is ever being revealed to men in the keeping of God's laws. How very different the ideal of the beast and the ideal of the saint; to the former there is no voice from heaven and no light from the grave; the beast dies and the end expected is the grave and eternal darkness. The saint listens to the voice of the Unseen, and the Spirit causes this thought to be written upon the souls of the redeemed, that those who die in Christ are blessed; they are not dead to God, they are at rest from their toils, and, in due time, the fruits of their work will be seen. In the moral world of life in which all men live, there will come a day of judgment, and that judgment is compared to the great harvest of the earth and the reaping unto life eternal. That which possessed life has reproduced life manifold; but the vintage is altogether different, here is no living food blessed by God, but the grape clusters, the great winepress, and that blood within which there is the curse of death and the wrath of God. These are ideal thoughts, they are not limited by reason or by the human vision, they are in heaven and in the Spirit, and thus men may study the symbols and try to understand what they mean. On the heavenly side the vision of judgment is as the harvest; but on the earthly side, judgment, and the wrath of God, may take many forms, and in the heavenly order of thought they may be compared to angels as the servants of God, commissioned to pour out upon men from golden vials what is conceived as plagues and the wrath of God. But before these begin their mission, a vision of heaven, and the redeemed is given to men, as they sing the songs

of Moses and of the Lamb, and praise and glorify God for His great works, His truth and justice, and for the judgments that have been made manifest before men. Notice is called to the fact that the seer observed that the temple was opened and the seven angels came out clothed in white linen and they received those vials of wrath which were to be poured out upon men. There is mystery about this pouring out of the vials of wrath ; they seem to reveal and to hide the glory of God ; His glory and power fill the temple, but men are shut out, they may not enter in, see, consider and judge, what may be said to be the strange work of God in judging and punishing men because of their evil deeds. A great Voice gave the command and the angels obeyed the Word of God. The first vial was poured out upon the earth causing sores upon those who had the mark of the beast and worshipped his image. The second vial was poured out upon the sea, it became like the blood of the dead, causing death. The third vial was poured out upon rivers and fountains and they were turned into blood. The angel of the waters considered this judgment of the Eternal Lord to be righteous, because, what is here fountains and waters, as symbol, has been guilty of the shedding of the blood of saints and prophets ; they, in their turn, are called to drink blood, and this judgment is true and righteous. The fourth vial was poured out upon the sun, and it became a power to scorch and burn ; and men were scorched and blasphemed God's name ; and did not repent of their sins. The fifth vial was poured out upon the seat of the beast, and the result was darkness, pain, blasphemy, and sores ; but no repentance because of sins. The sixth vial was poured out upon the river Euphrates ; and the water was dried up that a way might be prepared for the kings of the east. There was also seen by the seer three unclean spirits in the form of frogs, and these came out of the mouth of dragon, beast, and false prophet ; they are devil spirits, miracle workers, at work among earthly kings to gather them for the battle of the great day of God Almighty. They may not know their own mission ; or see the Divine Ordainer of all events ; they are occupied with many schemes, but the Silent One is very near and ever on the watch ; therefore, let men watch and keep themselves in truth and righteousness, and not be found walking in shame and nakedness. This great gathering will be where the hosts of good and evil will meet, and the earthly and spiritual will fight the great battle of the ages. " The seventh angel

poured out his vial into the air ; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." This is a great event in which all the voices of nature are heard and felt ; it is a great upheaval, causing great changes in the great city and among the nations ; and Babylon is brought into remembrance so that she might be punished for her sins and be compelled to drink that cup of wrath which was her portion. This terrible earthquake removes islands and overthrows mountains ; there is a terrible storm of hail, and the men plagued thereby blaspheme God and do not repent of their sins. It is in such varied ways that the judgments of God fall upon men ; because of sin Nemesis follows hard upon the heels of evil-doers ; and there is retributive justice and judgment. The symbol forms are there, and there is meaning in the signs ; but what they mean is left for the student to consider, and, it may be that the method of Christ may throw light upon them in due time. It is somewhat different with the great mystery of evil in the spiritual world ; there is in symbol, it would appear, another woman very different from that one who gave birth to the Man-Child, and it is the meaning of this woman and the judgments that must fall upon her that the angel desired to explain to the seer in Patmos. Where is this woman to be found ? Not in heaven, but away in the wilderness ; in the spiritual desert-places, where the earthly reigns, where the sensual seek for pleasure ; where men eat the apple of Sodom and find it turned into ashes in their mouths ; it is where God cannot be found by idol worshippers, and where the wild beast destroys. To see this woman in her false glory and grandeur it is necessary to be carried away in the Spirit, and in the Spirit to see and understand what she represents. This woman is seen as sitting upon a scarlet beast covered with blasphemous names, and the beast had seven heads and ten horns. Her dress is gorgeous in purple and scarlet, and she is decked with gold ornaments, pearls, and precious stones, and in her hand she holds a golden cup full of all that is abominable and filthy. Her name is written upon her forehead thus " MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." To all her sins she had added this diabolical crime ; she was drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. This vision appealed to the seer ; it was wonderful, and he marvelled at what he saw. Why such a marvel ? And what is the mystery of this woman, the beast with its seven heads

and ten crowns ? The beast is involved in mystery ; it was, and yet it is not ; it shall come from whence men can find no bottom, and it will go away into a place and condition men cannot comprehend. This beast is a horrible phantasm upon which the ignorant gaze in wonder, and they cannot understand how that which was, is not, and yet is. This is the charm of mystery ; it is phantasmagoria ; it is the problem wise men have tried to study for ages ; they have often thought that it was within their reach, but when seizing the bubble it burst, and was not, and yet it is. How strange that the very gropings of the thoughts of men of science and philosophy in the twentieth century, A.D., should be working at this problem of mystery ; it is evident that they cannot leave it alone, or it will not leave them alone, until a solution shall be found. " Here is the mind which hath wisdom." This seven-headed beast is like a city built on seven mountains ; and it is upon this city and its mountains that this woman is seated. But these mountains are also kings and kingdoms ; five of them are fallen ; they are in the past ; they are dead and yet they live ; there is one regnant with all the power and glory of the former five inherited ; there is still another to come ; and when he comes he will reign for a time. Now the beast that was and is not ; this enigmatic beast ; he is the eighth, the octave beast ; the same as the first, and yet he is of the seven, and his end is perdition, the incomprehensible, the phantasmagorical. The ten horns are ten kingdoms yet to come ; they will identify themselves with the beast ; they will make war with the Lamb ; they will be overcome, for the Lamb is Lord and King over all kings. The waters are not rivers or seas, they are peoples, nations, and tongues. The kings will turn against the proud arrogant woman, that was supreme over the beast, and make her desolate and naked ; they will then give their power to the beast until God's words and promises are fulfilled. " The woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Thus far the great mystery of mysteries, evil, and what angels may tell men about this great problem. The next vision is that of the downfall of this great world power ; this earthly, sensual, devilish, spirit, that has kept men in bondage to their lusts and passions. Who then is able to bring about this great result ? and, in what direction must the eyes of men be turned to see how this will take place ? The eyes must be turned heavenward, not earthward ; on the earth it is strife, hatred, war, tur-

moil, and spiritual darkness. The angel to be revealed will come from heaven with great power ; and when He comes the earth will be enlightened with His glory. With His voice there will be power, and Babylon will fall and be for ever destroyed. Let the saints of God have faith and cherish hope in their hearts ; the days of patient waiting are nearly over ; He will surely come and not tarry, and when He comes it will be with Divine power and in great glory for the salvation of men and the overthrow of every evil power.

WHEREUNTO do all these movements tend ? To the triumph of good over evil, of righteousness over iniquity, of truth over error, and of Christ over the devil. It is to the song of praise, and to the ascription of salvation, glory, and honour, unto Christ the Lord, the just Judge whose judgments are true and righteous. This vision is world wide ; and the praise of God is great from all men ; for the Lord God, the Omnipotent, reigneth. It is the time for the marriage supper, and of great rejoicing, for the times are changed indeed, and it would appear as if a new dispensation of mercy and grace had come to men. The heavens are opened to the vision of men and they see once more the white horse and the Rider. Men know Him better now ; in Him they recognise the Prince of Peace, and they know that His new names, Faithful and True, have been fully earned in that great war of evil against good, and of hellish hatred against Divine Grace. He is the Omniscient, and the crowns He wears are many ; all these things men see and understand, but there is a mystery about Him which men cannot fathom. He has a Name written somewhere that no man can read ; and that no man can know but Himself. This must be so ; this Name is the unnameable, because men have no faculty by which they can apprehend it. Wise philosophers have said that it is the Absolute, or the Unknowable, and theologians say it is God, the Divine ; but it would appear that all such names utterly fail to define that which is thought of as Being and Reality, and what men cannot understand. When men see Him riding forth on His white horse they know His Name, for He is the Peace-maker and Mediator ; when they look upon that vesture dipped in blood they call Him Saviour, and the Word of God. He will come in His glory as " King of kings and Lord of lords ; " and His enemies of every kind will be overthrown and destroyed. There will come a blessed resurrection to life, and a millennium of peace ; there will be a day of judgment ; earth and heaven will

be changed in their forms ; or, in the thoughts of men, and death and hades will be destroyed.

WHITHER has this realm of Grace and Mercy to men been tending from the beginning ? Even to the new heaven in man, and the new earth around man ; for the first generations of these have passed away ; the restless changing sea is gone, and what men perceive is no longer a chaos, or earth and sea ; but a well ordered cosmos, and the Spirit is glorified in His mighty works. Heaven the spiritual, reigns supreme, and earthly forms in their order are in harmony with the spiritual. The Holy City is seen as coming down from above ; the perfection of beauty and the joy of the earth ; the darkness is completely gone ; earth is as heaven, and God dwells with His people. Sorrow, crying, tears and death are all gone ; it is a new creation in Christ ; these words are written by the Lord's command, and they are true and faithful, they are like Himself, Immutable, and they cannot change. He is the Beginning, Middle, and End of all that exists ; He gives of His Spirit of Divine life freely ; and those who overcome will become the inheritors of the kingdom, as sons of God. Who can describe the glory of this Holy City ? It cannot be described on earth ; men require to be carried away in the Spirit, as to the top of a great and high mountain, to take in the Ideal, as it descends with the very glory of God upon it. All the precious stones of earth are required to give semblance to foundations, gates, and walls. The theme is for poet and painter ; common language cannot express the beauty of the gates of pearl, and the streets of pure gold. There is no temple or church in that Holy City ; it is all Temple, because it is all Christ ; and there is no earthly light, for Christ is Light, and His glory is made manifest. Here the redeemed walk in perfect safety, for there is no darkness or danger ; there is no enemy near, and thus the gates are never shut. There is no thirst, neither any hunger in this City of God ; for the Water of Life flows pure from God's Throne, and wherever men turn there are the fruit trees ever laden with precious fruits, that are to men the very Bread of Life. Thank God, the curse and the blight of sin are gone ; there are no thorns to pierce the heart, and no thistles to prick the feet ; even gentle, sad patience is now glad of heart, her hopes have been realised, and she rests in peace and content in the fair realm of Divine Love. The Lord is coming again ; He is coming quickly. His angel has been testifying this truth to men in the Churches upon the earth. The Spirit, the



Church, and them that hear give the invitation for men to come, and enjoy these blessed gifts that will satisfy hunger and thirst ; and they are all free, so abundantly and graciously free, that men are beside themselves who do not see and understand all that this means to them. The Testifier, the true Witness of all these things, has said, " Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

This brief glance at the Book of Revelation has shown that this very mystical and enigmatic writing responds to the method of Christ ; and that there is to be found in it a clearly defined eightfold division which will amply repay careful study. It will be sufficient at present to suggest the spiritual harmony that underlies the construction of Revelation, and to point out in what way there is agreement with Nature, Man, and the Bible, as the work of the Spirit ; and, that scientific philosophic order of thought that arises out of this study, according to the method of Christ. The first section is a revelation of the glory of God, in Christ, as Creator and Redeemer of Mankind. The second section reveals Christ as the living Glory of His redeemed Church ; with His messages by the Spirit to the ministers in the seven Churches. The third section is a Revelation of the glory of the Spirit as revealer of Christ upon the Throne ; and, as the revealer of all mysteries in the opening of the sealed Book. It is the Spirit that specially, as the Living Creature, invites the seer to see each new development, as the seals are opened ; thus the revelation is an ideal as to plan, purpose and work in the realm of Grace. The fourth section contains at least eight events ; and these are the earthly manifestations of the Divine Work of the Spirit ; it is the Divine ideal of the Kingdom of Grace upon the earth, and in heaven. 1. The earth as four square with its angel watchers. 2. The angel with the seal ; the sealed in Israel and the redeemed. 3. Opening of seventh seal with the silence ; the seven angels and their trumpets and the golden altar. 4. The four angels sound their trumpets. 5. The woe following the fifth trumpet, and the armies of Apollyon. 6. The woe following the sixth trumpet and the loosing of four angels in river Euphrates. 7. The mighty Angel and the Book. 8. The measuring of the temple ; the Witnesses ; the sounding of the seventh trumpet ; and the announcement of Christ's Kingdom. It is not difficult to trace the method of Christ in this very interesting section ; and, it can be

seen that this vision is, in a sense, psychic and empiric, it falls in with that stage of development which in man is equivalent to the soul, or mind and experience. Not that of common spiritual experience, or empiricism as found in the Bible generally, or in the conceptions of men, but as related to this Book of Revelation in its own order of development. There ought not to be any difficulty with the fifth section ; the great sign, or wonder in heaven is the ideal Church of Christ in all spiritual, moral and intellectual glory ; the Man-Child is Jesus Christ ; the dragon is that old serpent, the devil ; the war is the struggle betwixt good and evil, light and darkness. The dragon, as the deceiving serpent, the intellect perverted for selfish ends, is worshipped by the beast possessing power, that is despotic power, in the State, or the perverted moral nature ; and that other beast that blasphemes and compels men to worship the first beast is that hybrid form of religion that is imperial and despotic, not like the religion of Christ in form or spirit. The sixth section is like the fourth in the incidents related ; only the stage of development is higher ; it is within the moral realm and thus the fitness of the vials of wrath and the judgment upon Babylon. 1. The vision is that of the Lamb with the redeemed on Mount Sion. 2. The angel with the gospel ; and the fall of Babylon. 3. The patience of the saints and state of the blessed dead. 4. The judgment of harvest and vintage. 5. The seven angels with the vials of wrath and the song of the redeemed. 6. The pouring out of the vials and the results. 7. The battle of Armageddon ; the seventh angel pours out his vial in the air ; and the great earthquake and revolution. 8. The horrible persecuting harlot in the form of a woman drunk with blood ; the mystery of the beast explained ; and the downfall of Babylon. The seventh section contemplates the glory of Christ as Judge and King ; the great marriage feast ; and Christ, the Faithful and True, as Conqueror over all His enemies. The eighth section reveals the new heaven and earth, and the glory of the City of God. There may be a little difficulty in following the order of the opening of the seven seals ; the sounding of the seven trumpets and the pouring out of the seven vials ; but, if the method of Christ is followed what they mean may be discerned. It will be observed that the order of trumpets and vials follow that of the days in creation, 1 the earth ; 2 the sea ; 3 the fountains of waters ; 4 the sun ; 5 the seat of the beast ; and 6 the river

Euphrates, as the original home of mankind ; and, it follows that these fall into harmony with Nature, Man, and the Revelation in the Bible. These are suggestions, in the light of the method of Christ, which tend to show that the Book of Revelation in a mysterious manner synchronises with the Bible as a whole.

After this explanation it is only necessary to add that the method of Christ explains and harmonises the realm of Nature and all the natural sciences as to their order in a marvellous manner, when considered in the order of the Principles and realms of Force, Life, Spirit, Mind, Intellect, Moral nature, Grace and Sacrifice. The result is the same with man as the microcosm or epitome of Nature. The Bible as the work of the Spirit can be summed up in a similar order ; the same terms could be used, but, it is more true to fact, that the Bible reveals God as First Cause ; Christ as Creator and Archtype ; the Spirit as Ordainer in Divine Wisdom of all that is Ideal ; and the Manifester of Creation and the ten generations. There follows the revelation of intellect in Egypt, Moses and the Desert ; the Moral nature in Joshua ; the realm of Grace in Samuel ; and sacrifice and suffering in Israel. These are the natural ; the spiritual follows in the New Testament, in their due order. There is a scientific and philosophic order ; the conceptions being God, as First Cause ; Christ as Archtype and Creator ; the Spirit as Designer ; the Spirit as Worker immanent in nature and man ; the intellectual relations as scientific order ; the order conceived as moral law ; sin and lawlessness as regnant ; the King and the Kingdom of Grace ; and the way of sorrow by sacrifice, Christ being the Lamb of God, and Saviour of men.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE DIVINE BOOKS—THEIR ANALOGIES AND HARMONIES.

This brief survey of the Bible, in the light of the method of Christ, is an enquiry from a different standpoint than that of inductive science; yet, in a sense, the order followed may be considered to be scientific. Students require to keep every avenue of gaining information open, because there are lessons to be learned that will be found useful from experience and empiricism and from inductive and deductive methods of reasoning.

In the thoughts that have been suggested, both inductive and deductive, following the method of Christ, it seems to be plain that there is a marvellous unity and harmony in the Bible, and, it would appear as if the light radiant from the Word would be found helpful in the future study of nature and of man. It is true that the parable of light, the prism, and the spectrum, throw light upon the Bible; but it is also true that the Bible will be found to illuminate the realm of physical science and reveal to men that unity that exists through all creation. If the symbol of light and the prism is applied here it will be seen that there is a kind of analogy worthy to be studied as teaching a great spiritual truth, thus :—God is as the light; Christ, the Ideal as the Prism; and the Spirit in His works as the refracted rays in their order; man, as a second prism, intervenes, the creation of the Spirit, like unto Christ, the result being the realm of experience and empiricism; the stage arises when the converging rays of science find their way toward light, and when the light is seen then truth is known, man becomes righteous, he is like unto God, the Light of the universe. There is another way of conceiving this development; it is from God, through Christ, by the Spirit, into Nature; and out of Nature there emerges in the darkness of many millenniums of years, in perfect order, as the work of the Spirit, the man, the perfect convergence of the Divine Light. The

line of truth suggested here is not limited to the conception that man is sinful ; and, that, somehow, through the Fall, the whole of Nature seems to be a chaos, and in a state of unrest, waiting to be delivered. Theologians are familiar with this line of thought, and they have their own interpretation of what it means. Here the conception arises that this subject may be capable of a different interpretation ; that the chaos and darkness is in men, and that it is possible, if they knew all they ought to know, truly and rightly, they would perceive that the chaos is not in Nature, or in the Bible, but in men. Thus what they require is to think truly and act rightly, and then the chaos and darkness would vanish away. This is a very complex subject to study, but a little light may be thrown upon it by the consideration of Nature and man in the light of the method of Christ.

In thus suggesting that darkness and chaos exist in men, in a special sense, it is not to be conceived that they could have attained to scientific knowledge by any other means than that of natural development. The analogies that exist throughout nature point clearly in this direction ; but there is also an index finger pointing to the conception that if men had been equally anxious to know, and to do what they knew to be right, as the Will of God, the way of education and training might have been altogether different. It is at this point that all the complex problems of life meet ; the fact of Eden is a fact still ; men can eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life so that they may live and do right ; but, the fruit of the tree of Good and Evil is still forbidden, because to eat of this fruit so that the wisdom of self-conceit, and the power of the gods may be attained, is not in harmony with the Will of God. Upon this point there seems to be no difficulty ; it is good and right that men should seek to know the Will of God in all forms of truth that are presented to their souls ; but, truth in righteousness is all good, it is Divine Law ; and it is only when self-asserting men seek after truth, as of greater importance than righteousness, that evil, the spirit of the devil, is manifested. It is not necessary to illustrate this truth. Is it not a fact well known to thoughtful men that the pathway away from God has often been by seeking after truth in the wrong direction ; and, that the way back to God has been found in the realm of spiritual darkness ? What is the parable of religious knowledge as defined by Buddhism ; or as stated in Christian dogmas ? The chief thought kept in view is the attainment

of knowledge ; and that by the way of knowledge there is salvation. It is not suggested here that faith and works are omitted amongst religious people ; only that knowledge is the pivot around which the thoughts of men revolve ; thus the order usually is, believe the dogma, the fruit of knowledge, and let good works follow ; whilst the true order is believe in God, obey what is known of His Will, and from God, as the centre of all thoughts, seek to advance in wisdom and knowledge in harmony with the Divine Will. This is the grievous heresy that is to be found in all religions ; it is ego-centric and earthly ; and it is only when dogmas, or doctrines, are secondary and subject to the Will of God that men truly rise to the Divine Religion as it is revealed in Christ. If this line of thought is true and right, then it must follow that the religious revolution that is required to banish and destroy heresy is similar in order to that revolution in astronomy which took place when Copernicus discovered that the solar system is governed by the sun ; and not as men supposed that the heavens revolved round the earth. The very fact that there are divergent views upon the subject of religion ought to lead men to think that it is possible they may be wrong in the order of their thoughts. The chaos and darkness may not be in religion, but in religious people ; it almost seems that this change of centre would be equivalent to para-magnetism ; the darkness would pass away, the true light would shine, truth would be known, and the apparent chaos would be turned into a cosmos of Divine order and law.

As can be seen, it is the scientific order in Nature that brings illumination to men ; they read this book carefully, and every new discovery becomes a stepping stone to wider fields of thought ; it supplies the forms into which their thoughts are cast ; the physical becomes psychical, the psychical becomes moral ; and should men miss the divine way of life and find themselves wandering in the darkness in what seems a chaotic world, it is Grace that gives them new life, restores them to the Divine favour, and at last brings them in safety to the land of light, life, and love in God. In studying Nature it is well to rest upon great unifying concepts that seem to hold within them the harmony of the method of Christ ; if these tend to unification in realms of thought that lie at the root of these kingdoms, then it may possibly occur that they will prove to be the means by which other realms will be explained. The key to the Bible is to be found in

the Beatitudes ; the key to Nature and man in the eight principles of being ; and, it would almost seem that in the spirit of faith in God, by the method of Christ, and guided by the Divine Spirit there is no limitation discernible in any direction to what is true, good and right as the Will of God. The parables of the light, the prism and the spectrum ; the table of chemical elements in their order ; the magnet bar with its poles of attraction and repulsion ; para-magnetism and dia-magnetism ; and, the living cell, are all problems worthy of the most careful study, because there is found in them that mystical unity that points away from matter and motion to order and law ; and thus to spiritual ideals that transcend the physical and the vital. At present it may be useful to indicate in what way this line of thought develops as arising out of the root concepts in the physical world. It ought to be remembered that the suggestions to be made are not to be accepted as inductive science, but rather, seeing that scientific men have made known great truths as the result of their labours, men can now stand in that light, and inquire in what direction, and how far, this light of truth can illuminate their horizon of thought.

As suggested, the attitude of philosophic scientific thinkers is turned away from matter, as a substance, an entity ; to them as a literal truth matter does not exist ; what they know about matter is that it is capable of innumerable changes of form ; that it takes definite forms ; that these can be classified in order ; and that all these changes are regulated by laws that can be defined in scientific language. The thing in itself, the being at the root of all forms of matter, cannot be defined ; and it is not subject to the conditions and relations of the thoughts of men. The root concept, or ultimate of matter is named Force ; that is power or energy, and it is from this ultimate that related ultimates as conceivable in an order of development can be traced. It would appear that even chemical elements as things have passed away ; they are described in terms of quantity and quality ; and beyond elemental concepts there have arisen such terms as ions, and electrons, conditions of motion in which elements as forms are dissolved, and where men begin to ask themselves whether they have reached the end of analysis and come to the verge of the mystery of being. This conception arises that Force has related ultimates which receive definite names as forces ; and these are said to be correlated, to be exchangeable, so that under definite conditions known

to science, they may appear to change their order of motion. With the force named gravitation there is linked such thoughts as attraction and repulsion; the magnet bar illustrates this conception on a small scale; the earth as polarised and as a centre of gravity extends the thought; and, by the law of gravitation, Newton conceived this force as the power that governs the motions of all the visible bodies in the heavens. The force named heat acts in the way of expansion, of change of state, as from ice to water, water to vapour, overthrowing the power of attraction by the repulsion of atoms, thus bringing about division. In chemistry there are found forces of affinity that tend to unity or to separation, to analysis, or to synthesis, and all these relations are those of quantity and quality of the most extensive, complex, and marvellous kinds. Light, or motion in space, as from the sun to the earth, is conceived as a force or mode of motion. The state of crystallisation into solid crystals, in varied forms, is conceived as the result of motion and energy; and the modes of motion named electricity and magnetism are also thought upon as forces that can be correlated and changed into other forms of motion. Another line of thought in connection with physics is that motion is conceivable as vibrations; and thus change of condition may be expressed in rates of vibration. It may be that the solar spectrum when it is fully understood will unify the knowledge in this realm of thought, because it is conceivable that in the spectrum, in a marvellous manner, all these forces, or modes of motion are manifested. What is of special interest here as a conception of the far-reaching influences of law, as the Will of God, is that this one power can be conceived as a perfectly harmonious order; that the development can be traced; that the rates of vibration of motion can be known; and that the correlations of the forces can be defined. It is a very wonderful thought that here at the very root of the physical creation men find themselves not in a realm of chaos and darkness, but their eyes have been opened indeed, they are in a realm of light, and in a cosmos of order. The devil is gone, the presence and power of God is felt and known to be present in this new garden of the Lord, where men may eat freely of the knowledge of what is good, lawful, and right; and even prepare themselves to eat of the Tree of Life, so that they may live and not die. What ought to be specially noted here as important is the conception of development and what it means; because, in the light of the table



of chemical elements, of spectrum analysis, and of rates of vibration, the Method of Christ has been repeated, it may be thousands of times, in ever-increasing complexity. In fact, the vision of development here cannot as yet be fully contemplated; men have found a standard by which they may measure the physical universe; but how they will be able to apply it is a problem that may well stagger physical scientists.

In this way a bird's-eye view of the inorganic world may be obtained from the labours of men of science, and of thinkers who will not be limited by induction, but who, in their freedom, think that there is no valid reason why they should be limited in their outlook when the universe of God lies before them as an open book, and from the heavenly places, the high mountains of Truth, they can look up, down, and around, on all the wonderful works of God. It is seen that the inorganic world is, in a very definite sense, separable from the organic realm of physical life; that the order differs; that the laws are not the same; yet the change that takes place is of such a kind that men have conceived the thought that no new power has intervened; there has been, as they suppose, a change of method of motion, and thus matter and motion have become organised in form. In a sense this may be true; it is a kind of truth that men need not waste time in discussing, because the being at the root of matter and motion, and the being at the root of life, are equally inexplicable; so far as the intellect of man is concerned, they may be one being with two phases, or two powers made manifest in different forms by the same Being. This is true, that out of the chaos of the inorganic, from the simple, and more complex chemical elements of matter, such as hydrogen, carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorus, and other elements, what is known as protoplasm is formed, or organised; and out of the protoplasm there arises, or is developed, the living cell, which is a world of life in itself, being enshrouded in a membrane within which there is protoplasmic matter and a nucleus in which there is the life germ, from which there is development. This primal form of physical life may be conceived as possessing all the functions of life: thus development is not into anything higher in its nature, but simply into differences in form and complexity of organs. If this thought is remembered then the idea that the cell is the root type of all that lives will be an interesting one; and it will not be difficult to follow the conception that every permanent change in form is a

new type of living organism arising out of that primal type in the single cell. Two thoughts require to be remembered here; the first being that out of the inorganic realm, with its almost innumerable types or forms of development, there has appeared living protoplasm, which, even as inorganic matter, is very complex; and, that living matter is governed by laws which do not exist in the realm of the inorganic; the second being that in the order of development there is an ever increasing complexity of structures, and that these, as by heredity, carry forward within their own forms the history of their own becoming. In other words, all organic bodies, the simplest, and the most complex, as in the form of a man, begin with the living cell. The monera or protozoa may not as organs become more complex, but remain as single cells, or congeries of cells; whilst the germ cell of man during the nine months of development in the womb appears to go through an embryonic development of many types, and of millions of years. It will be sufficient to point out here that there is harmony betwixt the living cell and the method of Christ; and that the history of cell-life, as thus viewed, is deeply interesting.

(1) The living cell is the unit of life, thus the true type of all that lives. (2) The living cell receives by absorption, through the membrane, what may be conceived as chaotic in its environment. (3) The living cell assimilates into protoplasm that which was not living, and it becomes living. (4) In the nucleus of the cell there is the conjugation of the living, and growth of cells. (5) There is reproduction in the cells, addition of living cells, similar in kind, and also division. (6) The forms vary in the protozoa, but they follow the same order in the increase of cells; and this is the law of life. (7) The new cell forms as they separate from the parent cell begin their own separate life and law of increase. (8) Here the conception arises that with cell-life there is no record of death taking place; it seems to be that of living, multiplying, and increasing; the living does not die; thus at the very root of life, and in its primary type, the voice of nature is that life is immortal. There are other conceptions that arise in connection with the lowest forms of life, where disease and destruction are found to exist in unsuitable, unhealthy, insanitary conditions; but these are not considered here, the object being to think upon life as typical in the living cell, and that this cell life is the type of all healthy organisms. It is not necessary to point out here many of the ways in which the method of Christ may be applied to the

realm of organic life. The names of the sciences in their divisions, and the order of development in forms, may be found to respond to this method; but it is so complex and extensive that time will be required to form an opinion on such a subject. What is suggested here is that in this realm of organic life, when viewed from the standpoint of science, and conceived in the light of the method of Christ, there is no darkness and chaos, the light of truth shines, there is a wonderful cosmos, definable order, and this is law as regnant, the Will of God operative in the realm of physical life.

It has been stated that the physical world consists of the principles of Force and Life; that they are to be conceived as separate related ultimates; that their kingdoms are governed by laws that are unlike, yet they are complementary, and they are united together for definite ends. It is evident that there exists even a greater distinction betwixt the physical world and the psychical realm; and, so far, men have not been able to agree in thinking that the psychical is only an extension, or an involution, of the physical. The differences are so great, and the order of manifestation so unlike, that men do not see how this gulf can be bridged over by the explanations of agnostic thinkers. If this problem is carried into the realm of ultimate Being, and left there, as inexplicable by science, it will be well; it seems to be sufficient to think of spirit as a related ultimate, and from that standpoint to consider the relations of this power. The conception here is that the physical world of force and life exists in an objective form, and that by it men live and move; the body is not the whole man, only the house in which he lives, a divine temple, the work of the Spirit, revealing the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. A great and wonderful work truly, and, as men can now see, the embodiment and the product of law; the Divine Word made into flesh, in a way that, in the past, has been inconceivable. The question is not in what sense is spirit like force, because the ultimates are not knowable by the intellect; but is there to be discerned any analogy as to the order of the manifestation of these powers, and by analogy may the order be better understood? To begin with, it must be remembered that the historic continuity of Being is not broken; all that was in the inorganic and organic realms are carried forward; the spirit inherits all the past; it is interwoven into the structure of body and brain; and yet there seems to be a new beginning, because the indweller in the body is under many limitations, and each generation has to begin anew to perceive

what can be seen, heard, or felt, through the organs of the special senses. In this the psychical differs from the physical; the latter inherits the past; the former takes up a new psychic life in harmony with the past. Whether this is the Divine ideal and type may be an open question; it may be conceivable that there is a break here; or that when the type is realised there may be an inheritance of the past in organised thought. The realm of physics would tend to suggest that this is possible, because in that realm there is, as it were, a broken link in the chain of the physical forces. By, or through, that break men had lost, or not attained to the knowledge of electricity and magnetism; and it would almost seem as if science would desire not merely to correlate the forces, but also harmonise and unite them as one. There are broken links in all these realms of thought. Were these links united in each realm, thus producing harmony and unity, would this be another stage forward toward the true conception of the unity and harmony of the universe?

The analogies that exist betwixt these two realms may be expressed thus: 1. As with gravitation in the physical world, with laws of attraction and repulsion, so in the spirit there is a gravitation to, and in, the earthly body, limitation, and spiritual attractions and repulsions. 2. As with heat, there is change of state. So the spirit has to feel its way by the senses, thus perceiving what is external by divided perceptions. 3. As with quantitative chemistry, so with all sensations, images and sounds, there are diverse modes of motion all correlated in their order. 4. As with synthetic chemistry, so with all receptions of ideas, they are simple, yet become very complex; and it may well be that in their order they are in their due proportions for the treasure store of memory. 5. As with light and motion in space so the spirit seems to break out beyond the inner realm of the soul, and of the sense organs, and there is clairvoyance, or far-seeing. But it is not to be assumed that this means true knowledge, for in this realm light and darkness reign alternately. 6. As with crystallisation, so with light and order, the issue will be law; unless sin prevent, and then the result will be day and night; in other words, no true moral knowledge of the ways of God. 7. To put man right there is required the Divine power from heaven of Grace in Christ. 8. And He, as lifted up upon the cross of suffering and sacrifice, will, as by magnetic power, draw all men unto Himself.

All this is analogy. It is straining the outward forms into spiritual concepts, and trying to realise the operative actions of the spirit in man and trying to find out if they are like or unlike, if they are in the line of spiritual development. It is the turning of the dia-magnetic crystal toward the light, to see the light breaking through the darkness, and to be filled with the hope that this onward movement will end in the light as para-magnetic in the souls of men. The spirit is seen groping its way in the darkness outward to things natural and tangible; and, also, as peering downward into the depths of the soul, to the realm of internal darkness, wondering what like this realm will appear when the divine light of the method of Christ will reveal to men this kingdom, which is that of their own nature, but of which they seem to be very ignorant. The mind, or memory, or the soul of man, is the great mystery of creation; it is created mystery; it is the work of the Spirit as yet unveiled, and men have reached this stage, not of the manifestation of the created, but of their enquiry into, their study of, the work of the Spirit. Away beyond the darkness, the apparent chaos, on the heavenly side, the Spirit has been inworking in all truth, righteousness and wisdom the cosmos in perfect order and law. Men have been looking into this creation from their own side in the darkness; it has seemed to them to be chaos without and within; and thus the advance has been very slow and uncertain, the lines of thought do not agree, the Spirit thinks, plans, and acts in one direction, men think plan and act in a different direction, and thus the darkness in the souls of men and ignorance of the method of the work of the Spirit. In other words, the Spirit works as by the method of life; men think inorganically and mechanically; the Spirit develops the creation vitally; men think intellectually and critically, they destroy the living and analyse what they seem to think is dead, and thus the failure to understand the ways of God. The parable of the inorganic world may be the key to the operations of man's spirit; and the parable of the organic realm of life, of all that has lived, may be the key to the work of the Living Spirit, and the living souls of men. If, for example, men enquire as to the method of mental science as followed by wise men in past ages, has it not been as by critical analysis—the taking to pieces and trying to put into order that which must be described as lifeless and inorganic? Men have been working in the wrong direction; they have been analysing the bark of the tree of life

to find out the inner secret and the mystery of life. In themselves they have found chaos, in creation no apparent unity or harmony, and it is not strange that the results have been what men have experienced. In fact, the issue is being seen that men have all the time been seeking after their ideal, the open eyes, and the wisdom of the gods, from the ego-centric standpoint; they have been charmed by the intellectual serpent; thus wisdom and knowledge, and not understanding and life, have been their ideals. If this is so, then the necessity for the change of method of thought is clear; men require to be guided by the Living Spirit of Truth, of Christ, and without such a change, true advancement is not possible. The conception that arises here is that the mind, the soul of man, is living and organic; it is like the organic cell, a unit with capacity and living powers, and that it is not and never has been, as the work of the Spirit, an orderless chaos. In thus changing the stand-point of enquiry it can be seen that of necessity the conceptions of men may not be of great value, but, on the other hand, how magnificent this conception that at last men may begin to think like God, to walk in His footsteps, and, instead of magnifying men, be enabled in a worthy manner to praise, honour and glorify the Name of God, as He has been pleased to reveal Himself in His works. Man, as soul, is living, he lives in God, and God lives in him, he has power to receive God, capacity to absorb the thoughts of God, can see God in images and sounds, thoughts and ideas, thus the living can assimilate the not living, and the psychic soul lives as the creature of God. If men could pierce the thick darkness that surrounds their souls and perceive the work of the Spirit, being capable of understanding that work, what a marvellous complex world they would find therein; the microcosm world of psychic life is there, of that there cannot be any doubt; men know the fact, and they live as if they know it, but they are quite unable to explain the workings of the memory, with its manifold, mysterious links of association, response, correspondence, presentation and representation. There is mystery here, it is the mystery of psychic life, and it must be confessed that neither agnostic, psychologist, nor mental scientist, has been able to discover, or even suggest, how this mystery is to be explained. It has become an interesting question whether they are taking the right way to solve the mystery; and, it is very doubtful if the two methods combined, by physical life,

and mental intellectualism, will do more than prove that the solution is not to be found by these limited realms of thought and enquiry.

It can be seen that this analogy of physical and psychical life is a legitimate study ; it is following the order of development ; it is taking that upon which light has been cast and trying to reflect that light into a realm lying in the darkness. Thus the more clear the conceptions as to the laws of physical life the better fitted the student will be to enter this realm of psychical life, and by analogy discern the outlines of this greater realm, that may be conceived as possessing within its boundaries by development both the physical and the psychical. Because, it is not to be conceived that psychical life is only an inversion of the physical ; it is physical order and law, plus spirit order and psychic life—affection, instinct, intuition and law, and these as developed in the likeness of the physical. In other words, life, whether physical or psychical, is more than order, relations of thoughts ; it embodies law ; it is permeated with the Will of God, and thus as an index finger points away from the ever-changing modes of motion and sense, images and ideas, to the immortal and the infinite. It is quite true that such conceptions as these are in a realm that transcends the intellectual ; but, it is the light from the realm of law that is found here in this reflected form, and thus the evidence must be accepted, for all it is worth, as bearing upon these complex problems. It is difficult, but not impossible, to carry forward this conception of life in outward forms, as analogy, in harmony with the psychic life in the soul ; it is the problem of development as discerned in the physical realm, and it is difficult to conceive that a more satisfactory order of thought will be found. 1. The Soul, or mind, lives ; it is from life that it has been derived ; it is linked with the immortal and eternal past ; it is as, or like, cell-life in its unity of being and it contains all that it has derived from the past. 2. This unit soul so derived is correlated with its environment, and being so conditioned it receives or absorbs what has no soul-life. 3. With the perception and reception there is assimilation ; thus sense images become living ideas and thoughts in the soul. 4. The power to receive and assimilate is both limited and illimitable ; that is to say, the present limitation is to the environment ; but the prospective development is not conceivable by man. In a sense, analogous with brain nerve tissues, there is extension of cell matter,

but the nerve cells cannot limit the development of the soul.

5. The limitation of the physical breaks down before the advance of the intellect, because, as can be seen, the living soul reaches the stage where it puts aside the sensuous signs, the simple ideas, the compared thoughts, and there arises the new realm of words, as signs and symbols of thought, spiritual concepts that cannot be compared with what is visual, tangible or psychic in the lower stage.

6. All this development takes place perceptibly, or imperceptibly; it is inwrought into the soul as an order of development; it is not dead but living, for if the soul were dead there would be no recording angel there neither would there be any light of life, for it is the light of life that records law. Men have become familiar with photography, and with that special form of it known as the X rays, but is there not, in a way that men do not understand, a similar process in the soul in the records of the past as stored up in the memory? It is in the realm of spectrum analysis and photography that the merely physical seems to develop and become almost vital to retain, preserve, the past; and the living as physical transcends itself when in the darkness of the soul the evanescent sensuous images and thoughts are conceived as psychic. If there were no soul, complement and help-meet of spirit, there would not be any memory of stored thoughts in their order according to law; but being united, and working according to Divine harmony, the result is the soul in all its marvellous complexity, and order.

7. Here the inquirer may do well to pause, and try to conceive what cannot be considered conceivable in man's present state. The line of thought runs thus: If man had not sinned; if there had not taken place in man that break in the circle of the forces already referred to; if the development of physical life in man had been in harmony with law and not touched by disease and death; if the spirit had been living in the light of order and law, and the soul a cosmos of light, life and love; then is it possible that all the past could, or would, have become an inheritance of the soul, and, the vision be clairvoyant through all the ages of soul life? Such thoughts as these seem to be mystical and visionary, not worthy of consideration and without profit; but in the light of embryology, in the light of order and law, it may not be out of place to pause and try to conceive where the analogy of physical life tends. As related to man, instinctive and intuitive thoughts, affections



and emotions, seem to be very limited ; but those who are familiar with the lower creatures, and their habits, conceive that they do inherit from their parents what is equivalent to psychic memories of the past. These thoughts are meant to be suggestive not informative. If, for example, what is now accepted as embryologic science had been suggested as truth 100 years ago, would not wise men have scouted such conceptions as unreasonable and the man as insane who could conceive and utter them ? The stage of thought has changed, and what men seek after now is the knowledge of order and of law ; it is physical life that prescribes, or indicates, form to the life psychic ; this life is a life within life ; it is more, for it is life above and transcending life ; the analogies are as living links of thought, and thus the higher the life in its order then the more complex in its development because of the life derived, inherited, attained, and continued, within the human soul. 8. Above all, it is well to remember that life, all life, is that which lives ; it is not mechanical order, or accidental disease, for in this realm it is the Spirit that reigns in the life that is eternal from germ cell to the newborn child or adult man.

It has been conceived that in the order of development in Nature and man there have arisen two distinct realms of thought, the physical that is objective and the psychical that is in a sense subjective ; the former is that of forms and living ideals or soul images ; the latter is that of thoughts, relations, conditions, and conceptions. In the light of development both realms become representative ; they are complementary ; and the lower, as spiritual thought, becomes transcendent, and as order and law it permeates all the region of spiritual conceptions. These realms even thus considered may be kept apart and separate from each other ; the one conceivable as the macrocosm universe, and the other the microcosm of a human soul, and thus viewed they are conceivable as separate and yet as complementary. These are the two books that the student tries to study ; and if man could be conceived as sinless, and as beginning his studies, then it would be here that he would make a start to seek after knowledge of truth in harmony with the laws of righteousness. This is an ideal ; an assumed position, with this purpose in view ; it is to try to conceive what the innocent child-man would do when thus endowed physically and psychically with all that he has inherited from the past. It will be observed that the child-

man starts life, it is assumed, with rich endowments, of which he is in a measure ignorant; but, with sufficient experience, even empiric knowledge, for guidance in the realm of thought he is preparing to enter. What this child-man wishes to apprehend and comprehend is the writings, the symbols, contained within the two books he wishes to study; and, by doing so, to attain to a knowledge of the purposes, the plans, and the works of God, as they are to be found in these two volumes. It must be noted here that assuming the child-man sought after knowledge of truth, ever keeping the soul in full harmony with the laws of righteousness, the issue would not be a third volume like the other two with which he began his studies; it would be a transfigured spiritual volume, which would, out of the divergent lines of truth, converge into divine light, spiritual truth, and moral righteousness. In the midst of this garden where this child-man was placed there were two trees: the one forbidden as food because unfit for child-man; the other not forbidden, because by it the child would live and grow in knowledge, wisdom, and righteousness. If the tree of life and its fruit had been preferred, Would the life have ripened quickly in knowledge of truth and righteousness in harmony with Divine law? If that first man had remained righteous and true, and solved the problems of the two books in the light of God and heaven, then would that man and his descendants have remained true and righteous, immortals, like unto the angels? These are not hypothetical questions, it may be unanswerable: they are suggestive questions in the light of order and law, taken out of that realm of thought into which men are entering; and, what they ask, in the light of the Method of Christ, that permeates and reigns in all divine works, is what law, or standard of thought, they can now apply to find answers for such questions? It is conceivable that the attainment of the knowledge of all that is good is obtainable in harmony with the laws of righteousness, or moral law; and, in fact, it is now dawning upon men that the attainment of what is good and lawful cannot be achieved in any other way. It would seem, therefore, whether this problem is studied from the standpoint of the innocent child-man, or from that of fallen sinful man, the result is similar, the way of life is not to be found by cunning, by self-conceit, by seeking to know good and evil; but by conformity to moral law, by obedience to the Will of God, and by seeking after truth and

righteousness. If the self-seeking, self-assertive way is chosen, the issue is sin, transgression of law, disease, and death ; if the Divine Will is followed, then the way is that of life, of truth, and righteousness, of conformity in thought and action to the Will of God.

This is the ideal, the new type in man ; by the endowment of intellectual power and a moral life, the man, even as child or youth, is sent forth with the Divine blessing to conquer, subdue, and reign over, in truth and righteousness, his rich inheritance, the earth ; he is its lord and master, and will attain to the fulness of his lordship if he continues, as creature, to love, honour, and obey his Creator and Lord. It is not necessary to enter into details here as to the work of the intellect as a power to find truth ; what requires to be pointed out is that in all three realms under consideration the first principle has always in it the idea of power, and the second that of life ; thus physical power, spirit power, and intellectual power ; and physical life, psychic life, and moral life. The power underlies the life, and the life utilises the power ; the power is as inorganic, running upon lines of force or motion, changeable in form, correlating and convertible ; whilst the life is organised, absorbent, assimilative, vital, with internal vigour, ever dividing, extending, taking new forms and types ; and in some sense or other immortal and not subject to what men name death. In the realm of physical life it is force power that ministers to the support of life ; in the psychic life it is spirit power that ministers to the growth of soul and memory ; in the moral life it is intellectual power that ministers to the sustenance of this higher life, and without intellectual freedom the moral life gets stunted, feeble, and effeminate ; in other words, take intellectual freedom from men, and they are robbed of the means by which manhood is supported ; they lose the power of the Spirit of God, and the power by which the Spirit works for development ; they remain the conserved types of the past, unfit to be used or developed for the service of God or man. The utmost they can do is to preserve the type of life they possess ; they live upon the past, and they are starved ; there is no superfluous life ready to be developed into those higher ideals and types which the Spirit of God would make manifest. But it is necessary to remember that it is not power that produces life ; the life exists, and is organised ; therefore, what is required is that exquisite balance of power and function, supply and demand, conformity and harmony of action, which are

the fitting conditions and relations of life. This line of thought, as practical truth, is very important, and it may be that a brief consideration of the analogous intellectual power with physical power may prove useful. (1) The power of intellect gravitates earthward toward earthly concepts, and in its very nature there is that which attracts or repels. (2) It separates thought from thought, as they are like or unlike. (3) In such separation there are analytical operations and quantitative relations. (4) There are synthetic operations tending to unity and harmony, qualitative because of likeness. In such conditions the sphere of reasoning is that of experience and of empiricism ; it is this order that man perceives ; not science as now understood by man. (5) The realm of experience is that of darkness ; it is one-sided, earthly ; it lacks the heavenly light and vision ; thus for true scientific thought there is required the Divine Spirit to reveal the spiritual that lies behind and within the physical ; and without the help of the Spirit men cannot divine what is spiritual. The question of the conscious power of the Spirit in man does not arise here ; this is a later form of development ; all that is meant here is that, given a man whose soul desires to find truth, then that man may become an instrument prepared for the Spirit's work, even though he is utterly unconscious of the high honour of being thus used by the Spirit for the extension of the kingdom of God's truth. The range of thought here as limited to intellectual power, and the operations of the intellect, is not to be limited to one line of inquiry ; it may be applied to art and science, to philosophy and theology ; the conception being intellectual power and freedom in the spirit to seek after, and haply to find the true thoughts of God. This thought ought to be remembered, that all who thus seek after truth do so within the dark realm of their own souls, aided by reflected light from other sources of information. But they are enquirers ; they have no Divine Light for guidance, and no Divine standard by which to measure their conceptions. (6) If the light of truth and the light of moral life coincide and harmonise then this would be as the crystallisation of what is true, spiritual science and law, but with fallen man this stage has not been reached ; truth and life are not as yet in conjunction ; the condition is still dia-magnetic. therefore the light of truth is not fully known. (7) The Light and the Truth, the Life and the Way of Life in Love, has been manifested in light ; therefore, what the intellect requires is that in the light of truth in Christ, this way of life and truth be followed until

light and life, truth and righteousness are in harmony. (8) When this end is attained, then the great eclipse of history will be past, and men will find themselves para-magnetic to the light of truth, and alive to God in Christ the Righteous.

That such conceptions of the intellect fit into the experiences and empiric thoughts of men it is not necessary to prove ; thought and language agree with these suggestions, and as a rule it is found that the thoughts of men, in a limited sense, agree with the facts. As with the intellect in power, movement, energy, analysis, division, relation, condition, purpose, and similar terms, so with the moral nature of man it is life, growth, health, disease and similar terms that are used to explain the moral condition of man. (1) Thus life is like the physical life-cell, it is a unit power ; it is personal with an environment, and at its heart there is that nucleus that holds within it the great concepts of love, justice, duty, what cannot be measured or defined by the intellect. (2) The moral life may seem to absorb chaotic material in the thoughts which it receives ; but this is not so, because what is received by the moral nature ought to be the highest production of the intellect in such forms as are nearest akin to protoplasmic life ; even as in physical life through the living membrane there is absorbed elements of matter the most suitable to nourish life, so in the moral life, in the healthy soul, that which is received is what will minister for the upbuilding of the moral nature. (3) Such thoughts are assimilated into the moral condition ; the non-living is permeated with life ; and it is the Spirit of Life that inworks this divine change. (4) The soul lives ; it is an organised life of a higher type than the lower psychic ; there is a special divine form ; in a sense, this life has life in itself ; it is heavenly and Godlike ; thus it lives, in love, truth, and righteousness ; something that is as a vision to men, for it is not what men know in themselves, it is what they think they can discern in the Son of God, the Ideal Life. (5) In Him is this life. He came to give it to men abundantly. They are recipients of His Life, and this Life becomes the light of truth to men. (6) This Divine life is a type, but it is not limited among men to one type ; from the Ideal out of the past to the real and the present, there have been developed many types among men, in fact, it would seem that men require to be careful here and not place limits where they may not exist. It is true that Christ is the Arch-type and that in Him are all possible types, but it is this very possibility that would lead men to think modestly.

because they have no means of measuring or comparing the moral kingdom unless they think upon, as an analogy, the physical world of life and its order of development. It may be taken for granted that all moral life is one in Christ, but the varieties of form, and different grades of honour and glory, may be as wide apart as the protozoa is from the vertebrate man in the physical world. His is the Life original and eternal; and from Him there comes the regenerate life renewed by Grace; but here men pause in wonderment, they know something of what they are; they have got a glimpse of the Divine Life in Jesus, the Son of Man; but that other life to be given to the sons of God is a vision of the future; and it is summed up in this thought: it will be to be like Him, and it will be to see Him, not as He was upon the earth, but as He is in glory. (8) The Vision is the life eternal; the sorrow and suffering are past; there is a resurrection to the deathless life and the environment will be in harmony with the Divine life.

Here it is necessary to pause and to try to think what these thoughts mean. Poor mortals are graciously permitted to enter this third heaven; to look around them; to listen to thoughts that might be conceived as unspeakable; to compare the three heavens in their forms and order; and to realise that all these are in heaven, because they are above the earthly, and are conceived in terms of scientific order and law. This must be, in some sense, the heaven of the Spirit and of things spiritual. Are there seven, or eight, or even more of these heavens, all differing in their order and glory; and is this what men are to try to think upon when they speak of the law of development in the creation of God? Is this the pathway prepared by the King for His followers as they come out of the horrible pit of sin, and the miry clay of sensuousness, and find their feet resting upon the Rock of Eternal Righteousness? He came from the heaven of heavens to save, redeem, restore men, and they see as in a vision that heaven of heavens, thrown open for them, so that they may return to their Father and their Home. Can men doubt the truth of such a revelation as this? It is certainly not contrary to intellectual knowledge, or reason; the harmony that exists betwixt these three heavens, or realms of truth, are proof of this fact, and are not all the books of God united in their testimony to these mighty works of God? It is the plague spot of sin that mars what is so divine, and men do not know, cannot understand, how this plague

is to be stayed. This matter is far from simple ; it is complex beyond conception, and as dark as the way to hell. Where is it that this devil of evil reigns, and how can men discern his seat of power and find His throne and sceptre ? Does he reign in the first heaven of physical life ? In the second heaven of psychic life ? Or in the third heaven of the moral life ? Is it within the range of possibility that he has entered a heaven still higher in its order, into what men call the Church of Christ ? and can it be that even there the devil reigns, that sin is rampant, and thus death still holds sway over the sons of men ? Can such questions as these be ungenerous, uncharitable, and even wicked ? Is it reasonable to suppose that the devil can be so evil, sin so malignant, death so abhorrent ; and are Christian people deceived by their own thoughts, and unwittingly by their leaders and teachers ? Who can tell what all these things mean and what will develop out of them ; it is not a time to boast and rejoice because of victory, but for confession of sin and shame and to cry for help to God, to give strength and grace to obey His righteous will. Where is it that the devil is not regnant in this world at the present time ? Where sin is there is he, and he is so subtle that men are befooled by him to their own undoing. What is the devil, and what is sin ? The devil is that subtle serpent that deceives, that makes men self-seeking, fond of pleasure, covetous, self-asserting ; and, sin is, in the words of a catechism, "any want of conformity to, or disobedience of, the Will of God." The Will of God is law—that which is true, right, good and gracious ; the will of the devil is sin—it is the lawless—it does not conform to and it denies and disobeys law, the Will of God. This is where science is leading men to meet the devil face to face, for science is the great teacher and preacher of order and law ; and whether it is consciously willing or not, this is where science must stand, with the sword of the Spirit, as law, to destroy the devil and all his works. A beginning has been made in this great struggle. It may be said that science has exorcised the devil out of the physical realm, it has been reduced to a large extent to order and law ; and now it may be said that the devil is not in the physical order or law, although he may for a time be able to use the physical world for his purposes. The devil may be said to hide in the darkness of the human soul, because, as yet, therein the law of life is not regnant ; but, may it not be affirmed in the light of analogy, and of the physical realm, that he has no right to reign

therein, that he is a vile usurper of powers he ought not to possess, and that the day will surely come when law will reign in the souls of men, and then no place of hiding will be found for him, where the light of truth is radiant, and the life of righteousness regnant. Does the devil reign in or by the intellect and within the moral realm of life? This is a complex question, and it is necessary to remember what these powers are in the commonwealth of man's being. They are endowment powers—means to attain wise, true, righteous ends—they are given to men to make them like God, and not for the devil's service of sin and lawlessness. It is so that the devil has not only perverted the spirit, and set up his throne in the soul, he has also seized these divine powers and wielded them for his own ends, and the issue has been the perversion of spirit, darkness of soul, the reign of evil and error, of sin and suffering, and the degradation of the moral nature of man. But the vision that is arising before men is that this reign of the devil is utterly wrong and intolerable, it is folly and madness, for it is the wilful choosing of evil in preference to good, and of the devil's lies rather than the truth of God. It matters little from what standpoint this problem of the devil, evil and sin, is considered; it seems clear that the adversary of God is creature of God; this spiritual power is spirit, that which is endowed with will and power to plan and design; it is spirit power as repellent to good, de-magnetised and dia-magnetic; and thus it is not something new, unforeseen and unknown; in symbol sign the power may be traced in the physical realm, and it is as analogy that the spiritual is conceived in the psychic and moral worlds. It is necessary here to remember that analogies are to be used carefully and reasonably; it is suitable to take signs from the physical world and use them in the realm of spirit for education; but it would not be so fitting to use moral signs in the physical realm and to apply to it moral ideals. It is a mystery, but a great truth, that the spirit, or the will, is enshrined in the psychic realm, in the lower creatures and in man; but there is no attempt made by thoughtful men to ascribe to the lower creatures knowledge of truth and error, of good and evil, of conscience or of moral responsibility. There may be extensive psychic knowledge in the lower creatures; but there is no knowledge of abstract truth, no idea of scientific knowledge of order, and no conception of moral law, or of law as it is now applied by scientific thinkers. It is the knowledge of



Divine order, a revealed law, intellectual power to understand and moral power to obey, or disobey, that constitutes the moral order and moral law; and thus, these are required to be in efficient action before the problem of sin could be raised. It is a question worthy of consideration whether men are quite safe in giving their judgments upon such problems as these, as bearing upon the stage of development, when duty and responsibility begin in the young, or amongst barbarians? Without doubt the moral order ought to be set up before all, young and old, barbarian and civilised, but surely it is not just, true and right, to apply without any reserve the highest ethics, or moral law, to those who are in the infancy stage of development. The point to be specially noticed is this: the nature of man is moral; it is the order of his being; therefore, to man no other standard of moral life can be applied. By this he must be educated, tested, judged, and condemned, if there is failure in righteousness. This is the Divine order; it is the Divine ideal in man; and, upon no consideration ought the moral standard to be lowered, or tampered with for the purpose of excusing the folly, weakness, or sinfulness of man. This is all in the order of scientific development and thought; law is Divine, not human; law is good, not evil; law is true and right, not error or wrong; and any suggestion to the contrary is like that subtle, wily, deceitful lie of the devil, "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." It is useless to parley with the devil; as he is creature, it follows that in such matters he cannot be much wiser, though much more cunning, than men; he cannot know the essential Being of good—God—and as evil is the perversion, the reversion, the revulsion, of what is good, it follows that though he is evil he cannot know the Being of what is changed from good to evil. It may be that, as suggested by wise men in the past, the evil one had tried to solve this problem, and had failed; he handed it on to the sons of men and they have done their utmost to be as gods in knowledge. At last he has been found out; but, if the painter's art conveys truth to men, the fiend is in no wise repentant; and the leer upon his face suggests the thought that he has played the game with great skill and cunning, even though he may be compelled to confess that he will certainly lose the game.

It is under such forms of thought, imagery, signs and symbols,

that men must find their way to the realm of eternal law. It is too soon to form a judgment upon the many problems that must arise out of this method of thought as revealed in Christ. At every stage of advance a new heaven opens up to view ; and, within each and all of them, it is Christ that reigns, and it is the Spirit of Truth that is the Guide. In dealing with the realm of evil it is necessary to set up against it the moral law, and the moral world ; because it is when evil is confronted with good, with law, it is seen to be negation, or the reversion of good, but not a positive power to be desired ; and not that by which any man can be made wise. But negation, reversion, or any other name, or relation, as applied to evil, does not alter this fact, that when the negation, reversion, self-assertion, sin, fall, moral depravity, has taken place, the man is then subject to the lusts of the eye, flesh and the devil ; the manhood is gone, the crown of pure gold is lost, and the devil reigns with most subtle and satanic power. The remedy, the only remedy, for this fallen condition, the only means of redemption and restoration to God and to manhood is by Christ and His realm of Grace ; and it is the glory of the Bible that it reveals to men the history of this redemption, with all the stages of development from the Fall to the final Restoration. It has to be realised that this Book is as wonderful a creation of God as the great universe, or the creature man ; only man when thus considered is not any individual ; He is the Ideal Man, the Man embodied in, and identified with, the race of men. It may be difficult to grasp this thought ; but it is the ideal in the Bible ; and thus man generally, at his best, must only be conceived as an imperfect epitome, a living stone, in the likeness of the Man that is the Temple of God. By the Fall unity and harmony, order and law, as related to man spiritually, was lost ; ideally and truly man was a spiritual chaos, and in himself there was no power, latent or potent, that could by any possible means restore him to manhood. It is here that Grace intervenes to save. Grace is a new power, from Heaven ; it is a power that in its method of action synchronises with physical power, spirit power and intellectual power. It is a power that gravitates or ascends heavenwards with its own attractions and repulsions ; it is a mighty expansive power, causing changes and divisions ; it has in it that which is analogous with chemistry, quantity and quality, analysis and synthesis ; it is as light from Heaven to dispel the darkness of error and ignorance ; it is as a

pure crystal, a prism, through which light and its order may be conceived as law, so that the pure, the true, and the good, may see God; it is a divine electric power, to be used for the light of Divine Wisdom, and many other purposes; and, as a magnet, it is that which attracts all who fear and love God, causing them to cling to Christ, the Saviour of the world. It is chiefly as electro-magnetic forces that there is a striking analogy betwixt the realm of physical power and the realm of the power of Grace; and it is only in this age of physical scientific discovery that the fitness, the beauty, and fulness of this analogy could have been discerned. The meaning is to be found in this direction: in past ages the thoughts of men were that light came direct from the sun to the earth as in atomic action; the conception now is that light in the sun and light in the atmosphere of the earth are correlated motions, the force being carried by wave motion from sun to earth, and in the air motion is changed into light. But beyond light, as in this sense Divine power, there is another more subtle force ever operating upon the earth from the sun, electric in its action, not visible as light, and the action of this electric motion is to make the earth a magnet, a polarised body, kept in its place and in its orbit by the gravitation power in the sun. It will be observed that the fitness of the analogy for spiritual teaching is exactly what is required by men in the realms of Grace; it is another example of the Copernican revolution of thought; the earth and men do not rule and govern, they are ruled and governed, and the laws of Heaven are absolute and unchangeable. The daily rotation of the earth brings night and day alternately, and summer and winter in their seasons; but the earth is the creature of the Will of God. This is how these things are ordained by law, and the puny power and will of man are helpless in the hands of such powers. Even eclipses have their value as lessons in this realm of Grace, for they teach men that though for a brief period the darkness seems to swallow up the light, and blot the sun out of existence, men will find that an eclipse is only a small matter of moving bodies, and that they do not in the least affect the sun, or diminish its power and glory. When the Cross of Shame was raised on Calvary, and the sun ceased to shine upon men, then the symbol, and the spiritual, were in conjunction; this was the hour of the power of darkness; the earth's eclipse and the eclipse of Grace met at that point in history; but the darkness passed away, men's infamous work

of darkness was fulfilled to their shame ; and in due time the God of Grace, and the Sun of Righteousness returned to give light and joy to mankind.

Grace is Divine power in a sense analogous with physical power ; in the realm of order and law they have the same features ; thus it is reasonable to infer that the Spirit, the Cause of order and law, is in immediate touch with both realms and with the spirit and intellect. But, as with all the lower realms, the power of Grace exists for a purpose, a work, a kingdom ; the power will not be permitted to run waste and thus remain as inorganic ; it has come to bestow life, and to give it in abundance. It is the Life involved in the Word of power that is of supreme importance for men ; for this Life is the Light of men, it is the Light, shining in a world of darkness ; and the darkness ever absorbing, and never comprehending, that this Light is Life, the Life spiritual and eternal. It is not necessary to enter into details upon this interesting problem, because men have only to turn their eyes toward the Bible, and there they will find the record of this Life in its history and distribution on the face of the earth. The beginning is found in the generations of heaven and earth, when, in spiritual vision no man can be found to till the ground ; and what is seen is not man in his manhood, but dust of the ground. (1) It was into this thing that the Lord God breathed the Divine Life, "and man became a living soul." This is the life-germ in the realm of Grace ; the soul lives, and potentially man is living ; the germ nucleus of the Divine Life is there, and all that is involved in that germ will assuredly live, develop, and possess the earth. (2) Abel, Enoch, Noah and the flood ; this is the story of the living germ in its struggle for existence in the world environment. (3) In Shem, the Name, the Secret, the Spirit, the Power of Life. (4) In Abraham to Joseph the involved realm of the gracious life. (5) In Egypt, Moses, and the Desert the life as separated from the worldly environment ; an order of life for instruction in things moral and ceremonial. (6) In Joshua the Conquest and the Land of Promise, an earthly type of the moral and the heavenly. (7) In Samuel the life as in a nation, a king, laws, conflict, and victory over enemies. (8) The kingdom and its downfall and the bitter experiences of Babylon. Along with this line of thought there requires to be carried the conception of conflict, strife, persecution, and separation, and the effects of these prove to be the very means

by which there is ever-increasing life, and the distribution of life upon the earth. (1) Thus Abel the Martyr is the seed for his age. (2) The demoralisation in the days of Noah bring another crisis, the symbols are the flood, the Ark, and the altar. (3) The visible power and ambitious realm of Nimrod was the cause of the spirit life in the race of Shem. (4) The empire of Babel was the cause of the migration to Palestine of Abraham. (5) The tyranny, cruelty, and bondage of Egypt were the causes of the Exodus. (6) The degradation of Israel beneath the powers of Canaan and Philistia was the cause of the new era under Samuel and David. (7) The idolatry, worldliness, covetousness, pride, ambition, and evil-doing in Israel were the causes of the deportation of Israel into Babylon and the East. (8) And the seventy years of the Captivity is that period when the great change takes place; the natural is left in captivity, and the spiritual is born again to begin a new era of spiritual life on the earth. The spiritual development can be followed out in the same order in the Prophets, Isaiah to Obadiah; Jonah to Malachi; in the three Gospels; in the fourth Gospel; in the Acts; in the Epistle to the Romans; and in the Epistles to the Corinthians. The spiritual having been manifested, there follows the inworking of the Spirit in men and the reception and assimilation of the life of grace in Jew, Greek, and Roman. This is only the faintest outline of the development of the realm of grace in the world; it is in the line of the historic continuity; but students will find that this problem is a very complex one, and that the ever-recurring cycles of life will require careful attention, their keenest analytical skill, and their widest synthetic wisdom to lay out in scientific order the contents of the Bible, and to resolve the Word into the Law of God in Grace for the redemption of the world.

It may be suggested here that the Book of Revelation stands alone in the Bible, as a revelation in symbol, of the power of Grace, and of the conquest of good over evil by the Life of suffering and sacrifice. It is not different in spirit, or order, to the method of Christ, but, as a symbolic work, it is unique as a spiritual conception of the realm of Grace in history. As so often repeated by the seer, this revelation is "in the Spirit;" thus the inference would be that it is not to be limited to the usual concepts of space and time, to experience and to empiricism, but to be conceived spiritually as the Divine Revelation of Christ; of His Church;

of the spiritual plans and purposes embodied in the realm of Grace ; of the spiritual experiences and empiric conceptions of men ; of the conflict betwixt the serpent, or dragon, of evil and the Church, as spiritual ; of the beast as regnant power in man and in governments ; of that other beast with the horns of a lamb, the voice of the dragon, and with the power of the beast ; of the overthrow of the powers of evil and their works of confusion ; of the victory of good over evil, and of the kingdom of Grace as regnant upon the earth. It may not be easy to define what is to be understood by the words "in the Spirit ;" it is not the world of sensuous experience, neither is it the guesswork of empiric thought in many forms so well known ; the question that may fairly be considered is whether it responds to the Method of Christ ; and if the laws of His Kingdom, that permeate the Bible, give a true and satisfactory explanation of the order and the contents of this book ?

It may now be assumed that, with the explanations as to the Method of Christ, and the many examples given of the method, any competent student may understand and follow out this system of thought. That it is spiritual must be taken for granted, but it is not more and not less so in order than the physical sciences, because it is following out the same system of analysis to discover order, and of synthesis to discern law. That it differs from experience and the conclusions of empiricism is evident ; there is in a sense a complete revolution in the order of thought ; and yet, except where experience is faulty, and empiricism in error, it cannot be said that there is want of real harmony in the development of thought. It may be suggested that the great revolution of thought begun by Copernicus, and steadily pursued for centuries by scientific men, is now tending to its climax in the Method of Christ. This work is His from beginning to end ; this spiritual revelation by development is not the work of men ; but as written of another temple ; or is it this one that is meant ? "Not by might, nor by power ; but, by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain ? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain ; and He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying Grace, grace unto it."

It may be felt that this method of thought is not practical, and not applicable for common use ; that it may be interesting for scholars but not helpful in the stress and strain of daily life.

There may be a measure of truth in such a thought ; but, on the other hand, it ought to be remembered that scholarly empiricism and religious dogma are far from being simple ; and, great principles of truth, as a rule, are not so very difficult to apprehend and comprehend. If, for example, the realm of empiric thought is to a large extent intellectual and logical, and not truly moral, then is it not worthy of consideration, that there exists a measure of antagonism against the empiric method of thought ? Is it not a great truth that there is a moral revolt in progress against what is empiric and not moral ; those degraded methods and policies which enlightened moral men know are not true and right, even though they are hoary with years and supported by the highest authority. Christian men, enlightened by the Spirit of Christ, feel and know, that in society, in the State, and in the Church there are conditions that are false and wrong ; they would feel morally degraded to approve of what their consciences condemn ; and, yet, it would be with great difficulty they could prove to their own satisfaction, or that of others, where the error lay, how the truth could be made manifest, and what is wrong could be put right. Thoughtful men know well that these conditions exist ; in fact they are, so to speak, morally developed above their environment ; and, whether they know it or not, it is by the Spirit, and the method of Christ, as alive in Christendom, that they have attained to this discontent with their surroundings. If, then, men are looking for this higher order that will harmonise order of thought and law, of duty and privilege, it may fairly be expected that there is no insurmountable obstacle in the way to prevent practical thoughtful men from understanding what is truly scientific and what is in harmony with the method of Christ.

It is somewhat strange, but true, that men will search in vain for any fully defined system of moral laws as to life and duty in the Bible, and, it is probable that few men would be found to agree to formulate such laws as positive laws, and as obligatory upon all men. This is remarkable, and doubtless many men have noticed, this apparent lack of definiteness in the Scriptures. Is this to be understood as an omission ; or, is there any good reason why, in the Divine Wisdom, this order would not be in harmony with the method of Christ ? It is well known that the moral law, or the ten words, is not in positive form but rather as warning men what they ought not to do. It is never assumed

that this moral law is to be conceived as, in the highest sense, spiritual; the loftiest conception, as men know, of moral law, is summed up in the command to love God, and to love man; because this sums up, or spiritually expresses, the ideal that is in moral law. Even what has been conceived as the laws of Grace, are not expressed in a set form as duties; they describe the blessed state of those who are being saved; and they are to be found useful for guidance for the followers of Christ. It is true that Christ gives to His disciples one brief law, like unto the moral law of love to God and man; and it is in the same line of thought, for His Commandment is that His disciples should love one another, even as He had loved them; but this is an ideal to imitate as much as a command to obey. There must be a good reason for this evident avoidance of written moral, or gracious, laws; and, it appears as if they would be out of harmony with the method of Christ, and His order of development for His followers. This is hinted at in the Old Testament in the broken tables of stone at Sinai; and, in the promise in Jeremiah of the laws of God being written in heart, mind and soul; in fact, in the line of true spiritual development, this is the only fitting issue and any other method would be a mistake, because it would be limitation of defined forms, when the end aimed at is conformity, harmony and unity of the nature of man with the Will of God. This thought is worthy of the most careful attention; it may be said to be a spiritual test to all the religions of men, and all their works. The service of God is spiritual freedom in the spirit of love; and, failing this supreme quality it is failure, and it is not, and cannot be, perfect as law in the sight of God. This great truth may be presented to men in an ungracious light; if set up as a standard, and every man was condemned who failed in love and obedience, then, the result would be utterly wrong because it would be contrary to the love of God in Christ, by Whom men are being graciously developed to the ideal standard that is in Himself. Here, then, is a strange position to reach; and how are men to guide themselves past this apparent paradox of a moral order, that can be intellectually studied; and yet it is not fitting to tabulate that order in written laws that will become obligatory as duty. Is it not evident that this reasoning is not conformable to intellectual and to ethical teaching generally? Why is it that the method of Christ is right and the intellect and ethics wrong? Mature reflection



will show that Christ is right for this reason, easily overlooked, but very important when spiritually discerned : it is not meet and fitting that the heir of the house should be under law to the intellect, the servant who keeps the house in order ; and, it is not the Will of God that His representative, the moral man, in his realm of manhood, should be subject, as a mere servant or slave, to an order of law. It must be confessed that the deepest spiritual utterances in the Bible support this conception of the greatness of man's dignity and honour ; it is the very atmosphere in which Christ lived ; and this explains the consistency of the life and teaching of Christ as related to His disciples. It is a great truth, experienced by many men, that what they long to get direct from Christ is written law as to duty ; law as to the Christian life in the way of Salvation ; and forms of prayer for guidance in their devotions ; but, the Master sums up all moral duty in the Spirit of love ; all Christian obligation in the blessed state of being saved ; and prayer, after the manner, but, not in the special words, given to His disciples. In fact, if an honest agnostic understood these thoughts, he would be compelled to avow that the religion of Christ is Divine, just because it is so unique upon these very points. Man is divine ; manhood is the image of God in truth and righteousness ; man is not true and religious, therefore, there is failure somewhere ; how can he recover likeness to God ? Only in and by Christ, the Saviour. What is the ideal ? " Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

In the pure light of love, how does history look as it may be traced among the nations of past and present ? In the age before the flood it is a black record, for it is chaos, anarchy ; there is no love or fear of God or man, and the judgment upon the race is evil only, and evil continually. (1) The realm of Babel is the manifestation of absolute power, and Nimrod, the hunter, is the type of that age. (2) The kingdom of Nineveh is branded with deeds of cruelty, and her path may be tracked with blood and suffering. (3) The empire of Babylon represents, in Nebuchadnezzar, man proud and arrogant ; the antithesis of what is Godlike. (4) Persia may be the glory of the earth in its dominion, power, glory, and worship, but how different from the ideal to be found in the kingdom of Christ as made known to men in Galilee. (5) The world of intellectual Greece is a marvellous efflorescence of the power, wisdom, art, and glory of the human race ; but Athens,

the eye of Greece, with its many gods, and an unknown God, shows clearly to the onlooker that by such wisdom men do not know God ; and by such a civilisation there is only a reflection of the light of truth and observance of moral law. Greece, so richly endowed, is a spectacle for men to study ; but the study ought to be in the light of the method of Christ ; and in that light Greece will be seen as the nation truly lived, an embodiment of the possible intellectual greatness of mankind, but utterly foolish and idolatrous in the sight of God. (6) Imperial, and imperious, Rome is the fountain of law and the glory of man ; here indeed absolute power is triumphant, cruelty rampant, pride regnant, and conceit as to knowledge of truth, law, and right, complacent ; but it is Rome the merciless, the impure, covetous, and idolatrous, with an ambition insatiable to subdue and govern men. (7) What have the Christian empires, so named, of East and West to add to the glories of Rome ? They have been as the clay mixed with the iron, thus the deterioration of a great ideal, and the tendency to degradation, and to anarchy. In the symbolic language of Revelation this is the terrible beast that served the serpent, the great dragon. (8) There is still another beast, with its lamblike horns, and the voice of the dragon ; religious power, as united with the secular state ; and this is no whit behind former powers in all its works of evil. It is in such forms that history is conceived in the light of the method of Christ ; men have not been men ; they have degraded themselves from manhood to be like cruel beasts of prey ; and even to this day, nations glory in their symbol gods, as eagles, bears, leopards, lions, tigers, and dragons.

The subject of the development that has taken place in Christendom during the Christian era is one that ought to be full of interest and profit. All that will be suggested here is that the same law of development may be traced, and that a twofold order may be followed. (1) The Apostolic Church at Jerusalem. (2) The division into Jew and Gentile. (3) The spiritual formative period in the Empire. (4) The union of Church and Empire under Constantine ; thus the degradation of the Church into the secular order. (5) The great Arian struggle and the separation of West and East. (6) The Church and the Empire united, and the ascendancy of the Church in power. (7) The Church in its spiritual power, as conceived in the Fathers and their theological systems of thought. (8) The period of conflict in Church and State, and the Crusades. The second series may be traced thus ;

(1) The rise of the Christian Empire of the West. (2) The conflict betwixt the Empire and the Papacy. (3) The ambitious worldly, earthly spirit in the Papacy. (4) The dark ages in Europe, and subjection to the Papacy. (5) The Reformation period. (6) The Deistical, ethical and rationalistic period. (7) The Evangelical awakening to religion among the Anglo-Saxon races. (8) The great conflict betwixt science and theology; of agnostic unbelief, critical scepticism, and the sustained faith in God and trust in Christ amongst the masses of the people.

The position as regards spiritual truth, moral law, and the kingdom of Grace is assuming new forms. It is by the study of nature that, in a sense, truth may be said to be springing up out of the earth, and it is in the study of man, in the likeness of Christ, that there is correlation with nature, and co-ordination with the Divine in moral manhood. The Bible is the Word of God in a special sense, as the realm of Grace, by the Divine Wisdom in the Spirit; and the new book to be written is man's conception of the harmony and unity that exists through all the works of God. This is like unto the fourth line that completes the square, because when this line is radiant with the glory of Christ, then the powers of evil will be cast out, and men will be in a position to keep out of their redeemed inheritance the wicked serpent; and they will understand the folly of seeking to know both good and evil, when the good only is law, as the Will of God.

It may be worthy of consideration to notice the harmony that exists betwixt what are named principles of Being, and those divisions of thought which have been summed up as separate books under the concepts of Nature, Man, the Bible, and the summation of all these, in their unity and harmony, as conceived by men as spiritual scientific truth. It is in force and life, as objective, and all involved in them, that Nature is revealed, in other words the physical universe reveals God, spiritually as scientific order and spiritual law. God is All in all. Spirit and Mind reveal Man, that is to say men in their studies, conceive that the psychical in order and law, is the involution of the physical or of nature. But this involution of Nature, as Man is the Arch-type of Being—Christ. The intellect and moral power reveal the Spirit, the Word, thus the double line of thought that the Spirit in Divine patience reveals Christ to men, and men by the Spirit receive the Divine illumination of spiritual truth. Grace and sacrifice reveal the Divine Love, the spiritual,

by which the Love of God in Christ as salvation from sin is received and conceived by men in Divine order as the law of love.

These thoughts may be expressed in another form in this way. NATURE as viewed by science is no longer conceived as a chaos, it is definable in terms of order, law reigns, the lawless is abolished as extraneous and there is revealed to men the Divine cosmos. The issue here is that law, as spiritual, harmonises with scientific order. It is strange but true, that this vision of truth in its realization synchronises with, and may throw light upon, that "deep sleep" and "horror of darkness" that fell upon Abraham, when it was revealed to him that Israel would be afflicted in Egypt for 400 years. As to Abraham then, so to the faithful through all the centuries, the question has been "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" How can knowledge come but through the fulfilment of the promises made? That fulfilment in history has been and could only be, by the divided sacrifice, the night, the horror in the darkness, the smoking furnace and the burning lamp. When God gives a promise it will be fulfilled in due time, and doubts as to the fulfilment show ignorance, lack of faith, and want of trust in God. It is the lack of faith and trust in God that is the most unreasonable thing in mankind, and what is most strange, when men come to see the truth, is this, that all the time, when they have been in the darkness seeking to know how God would fulfil His promises, and bring men into their inheritance of truth and righteousness, they have actually been living, moving, and having their being in God. This is the true meaning of nature in the light of sanctified science; He is all in all, and apart from Him there is no being or existence. When men, therefore, in their ignorance speak of Nature, an Absolute, the Unknowable, Reality, the Almighty, the meaning is that they are compelled by their experiences, the trend of their thoughts, to confess belief in God; in fact, He is the Substance of all their thoughts, and what they think is known to be, by spiritual science, the relations of the thoughts of God. To put all this in plain words, if what is here suggested be understood, the result must be faith in God; because it becomes absurd, unthinkable, that men should continue to think of Nature as abstract and impersonal when the *order* of nature, by the way of science, leads them direct to God, to *law*, as the revelation of the Will of God, and to Cause, as personal. It is by spiritual law that men break through all

veils in nature, and thus, in a sense, they perceive the face of God as radiant in truth and righteousness.

MAN, it may be said, as a study in order and law, is objective, another book, different from, but in harmony with, the book of NATURE. In the process of study the student conceives what man ought to be in the light of order and law, but he cannot find the true correspondencies in himself. Faith is begotten in the soul, the divine life is restored, and the first-born is hope as the fruit of faith. It is faith that justifies the life as of, and from, God, and hope inspires, absorbs the life divine. This is the life of faith as opposed to unbelief; the Ideal lives; the truth is cognised in order and law, the issue being the conception that Christ is the Ideal, the Hope; thus the inspiration of hope is Christ.

In the study of NATURE men find God, He is the objective in the fullest sense of all their needs. In MAN—Christ—men find their hope, the Ideal of their highest conceptions. In the Bible men find the SPIRIT as revealing Christ. Thus the Bible is the history of the revelation, as an order of development, of the patience of the Spirit of God in the salvation and restoration of men to God. The Spirit reveals grace and truth, not in abstract conceptions of theology, but in the practical facts of life, in the interactions of the work of the Spirit upon chosen typical men, in spiritual influences within men, and, in conflict with the powers of evil. The special goal of the work of the Spirit is the revelation at the appointed time and in the way of Divine wisdom, of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. Following the Ascension of Christ, the Conqueror, the Glorified, there follows the fruition of the work of the Spirit, by the Gospel, thus giving to men the Ideal, the Desire of all nations. The Bible also, is, as a book, an objective study specially of the marvellous patience of the Spirit, in the great work of the redemption of mankind from evil.

These are the three Divine books given to men as means of instruction, as revelations of grace and truth, to guide men into the way of righteousness. By means of the physical sciences, in a special manner, the realm of nature is rapidly changing from a chaos to a cosmos of order and law. The light cast upon nature is being reflected upon man, and thus the chaos of his complex being is falling into divine order upon the lines of the natural; and the conception has been reached that a true cosmos exists in Christ, and that He is the Ideal men require to study. The Bible, which many men had conceived to be a chaotic production,

the work of men, is now beginning to be conceived as the most glorious manifestation of the work of the Spirit of God, the Divine Light, the Cosmos of redemption. This is the spiritual Light that will radiate light, the light of truth, upon all books, all realms of thought, and all men; in this Light men will come to see Divine truth and righteousness, and thus glorify God, the source of all blessings. It is for men to ponder over, to study carefully these conceptions. Nature is no longer the Unknowable, for it is the Voice of God to men in scientific order and Divine law. Nature is God the Faithful, the True and the Righteous conceived as Law; it is man that is lawless, faithless, untrue and unrighteous. To be regenerate, to live in God by faith this is the spiritual life. To possess this life in the germ is to possess the Type, the Ideal, the Divine Hope. To possess faith and hope is to have that which is the Divine life of grace, and this means in the light of the Spirit's work development to manhood, and to be transformed into the likeness of God, and the image of Christ, as the work of the Spirit. This consummation is conceived as the manifestation of the Divine Love, it is law regnant as love in mankind, and this is the true inheritance promised by the Spirit in Christ, as the Will of God.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SUMMATION.

*"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."*

*"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of Kings is to search out a matter."*

The conception of life for man is that he is a unit in the great mass of units of mankind; he is a microcosmic summation of all that surrounds himself; all his environment is Nature, and he, as man, is the epitome of all that is in Nature. Man being what he is, an intellectual moral being, it must follow that he will try to solve the mystery of Nature and of his own being; and he will also try to find out those correspondencies, or links of likeness in being, that co-exist in Nature and in himself. Man, by his intellect, reasons, and tries to find out what is true and right, and thus he takes up the whole range of questions from Whence to Whether? and every true related thought discovered, and every righteous law understood, become stones upon which his feet can rest firmly. It is a true conception that Nature and man are, comparatively, in the state of chaos; it is the intellect that produces order; and, it is by the intellect that man rises above the chaos of the lower creation and creatures; and involves, or inworks, within himself that which becomes a cosmos of order. This is man seeking after the image of God; he is impressed with this thought that in Nature, and in his own being, if he can only solve the mystery, he will find that which is like God. If men limit their inquiries to these two channels of thought, which flow on side by side, the result will be, as found in history, an almost infinite diversity of conceptions, mythical, practical and philosophical, but men will search in vain for that unity and harmony of thought, which true thinkers conceive they should

find as the result of their studies. The Agnostic philosophy, as expressing the fullest development of what may be termed the study of Nature in scientific order, is not an exception to this rule ; it has climbed higher, seen further, and more clearly upon many points, than other systems of thought, but the result is not unity nor harmony, but division and strife. The Agnostic method of thought is said to be monistic because it includes Nature and Man in its immense sweep of thought. It is like a great avalanche sliding down the mountain side ; but it comes with a unifying power for destruction ; the man is destroyed in the ruin ; he is nothing even as man, regnant in manhood ; like the moth he is crushed out of existence ; and those who thus place man under the heavy heel of Nature do not seem to realise the greatness of their offence. It is not to be supposed that man, as a moral being, accepts this decision of the Agnostic thinker ; even the father of Agnosticism felt that his soul protested against such a theory ; and he could not bring himself to believe that out of the iron machinery of evolution, there could arise that inner monitor in man that loved truth, felt the obligation of righteous law, and could act willingly in the way of gracious self-sacrifice. It is plain, that history fully proves that unity and harmony of thought cannot be discovered by the fullest comparison of Nature and Man ; that there are subtle links of sympathy and oneness of being is not doubted ; in fact, if there were not the chaos would continue, man could not rise above the beast, and he would not have the means of advancing toward manhood.

There is introduced into this problem what is named Revelation, by Word, Promise, Sign, and by, in a special sense, the Bible ; and linked with these among all nations of men, there have existed such conceptions as God, Faith, Duty, Sacrifice, Religion, Heaven, Hell, and other terms known to priests and religious thinkers. It can be seen at a glance that this third concept has a distinct cleavage from Nature and Man ; it may exist apart, but, so far as the evidence of history is available, it must be confessed that where there is no religion there is no civilisation ; and the higher and more spiritual the religion, the higher the civilisation of the people. In other words, here men find the great book of Nature by which they are surrounded ; they find that every man is a book of the most complex and enigmatic kind, like the book of Nature ; and there is that Book of revealed



religion, oral, ceremonial and written, which evidently has had a greater or less beneficial influence upon men as they have understood and obeyed its fundamental lines of thought. Man is, in a sense, the central point in this system ; he seems to be above the other two ; it is the man that sees, thinks, compares thoughts, and out of the chaos within and around, he builds up, or develops within himself, what is to be found in his environment. As to Nature it may appear to man to remain the same physically and psychically ; it is the great chaos that seems to be without form, or order ; and it is too great to be interpreted. With man, history deals more kindly, for there is growth in knowledge, and development in many ways ; the puny creature is a great wonder-worker ; he can subdue nature and make it fruitful ; he can harness the winds to his ships and cross the great seas ; in fact, give him peace and freedom from war ; liberty to act and freedom to think, and there is that within man that will compel the service of all natural powers, and subdue for service what is serviceable, or destroy what is lawless and venomous. The man grows, and mankind develops with the ages ; and thus the study of man, as revealed in history, ought to be one of the most fruitful means of education. It has been suggested that apart from religion there is little development ; and those who have little religion remain barbarous. As a rule this will be found to be true ; and, as arising out of this thought it is conceivable that religion is the cause of development : thus wherever religion is free and spiritual there is development ; but where religion becomes perverted, degraded, polytheistic, impure, merely traditional and ceremonial, then growth fails, development is at an end, there is stagnation, want of enterprise, a fixity to type, and beyond this stage there is no upward spiritual growth. Such a conception as this will seem to run contrary to the modern conceptions of many advanced thinkers, because their continual cry is that religion fetters and enslaves men ; the remedy being death to religion, in its every form, and perfect freedom in science and philosophy. The assumption here is that man may be compared to one book ; and, that nature is the great volume from whence he draws all his sensuous psychic experience and his empiric knowledge. Is it to be conceived that by these two books with their correspondencies, their likenesses, reflections from, and upon, each other, that man could develop into manhood, in other words God-likeness ?

The conception is absurd, and the savage is the answer ; he is the example of what man would be with the smallest possible amount of religion. That this is the truth in this matter may be inferred from the study of nature, the body of man and psychology. Nature is interpreted by man through the special senses ; and so far as physical nature is concerned, as related to the physical body, there the intercourse with nature ends. The next stage of development is psychic, in other words, pictures, sounds, smells, tastes, and these are changed into ideas, and thoughts ; they are stored up in the mind or memory, and there is simple comparison, representation, intellectual name, experience and empiricism and there the development ends. These are important psychic problems of thought lying at the root of man's being, and the question to be asked is not, why is it that the savage does not rise to a higher stage of development ; but, how could he do so seeing that he is limited in his thoughts and studies to the book of nature, the primary alphabet of the senses, and to the book within himself that can never, as a psychic work, rise to the knowledge of Divine order, and law. It will be observed that the range of the vision thus possessed, must, as the product of nature, and what is psychical be limited by what is intellectual, or cause and effect ; but the moral man will not be limited by these, he will evermore assert the right to put questions as to moral law, with all that is involved in obligation, duty and conscience. The natural man would be an intellectually developed beast, subtle and dangerous ; but he could not be a man in the image of God. This line of thought requires careful study ; it is very important, as teaching psychic and intellectual limitations, as referring to man ; and as the means of explaining the fixed stage as to type of those said to be savages. With the introduction of the third book, Revelation, as oral, ceremonial, or as a written book, there is a distinct change ; because, with this there comes to men spiritual conceptions, God as Creator and Lawgiver, Faith, Duty, Responsibility, etc., and it is by these that the moral nature would be trained ; that truth, righteousness and goodness would be conceived as divine ; and, the divine would be the Godlike, or manhood. But, the savage man could not be supposed to understand this very complex argument ; his place is so low in the order of development that the reasoning is altogether beyond his powers of thought. It is only in the light of history, philosophy, theology, science, and the method

of Christ ; after sixty centuries of bitter experiences, earnest study by thoughtful men, the revelation of Christ, and the work of the Spirit, that men can discern such truths, and strenuously make the attempt to put them into human language. It is the third Book that possesses vital spiritual power ; let men make no mistake about a matter of so much importance ; without this Book the race would be as a dead race ; in other words, like wild beasts and savages.

It would appear as if this line of thought leads up to one already familiar in this study as dealing with the fundamental thoughts that lie at the root of the Kingdom of God. The conception being that if the order of numbers is taken, one represents God ; two Christ, the Ideal ; three the Holy Spirit as spiritual power, purpose, design, numbers, etc. ; and four all that the Holy Spirit is as made manifest in the visible creation. These are philosophical, or mystical concepts ; here the thought arises that Nature may represent God, that man may represent Christ, and that the Word may represent the Holy Spirit. The vision is that by Nature, man, and the Book as considered, placed in order, revealed in terms of science and law, the result will be the new heavens and earth, because the old creation will have passed away and all things will be renewed in the image of God and in likeness to Christ.

In this brief explanation of the means by which a man grows in knowledge, or is developed into manhood, Godlikeness, the issue has been the conception that apart from moral law there is no manhood ; and that mere intellectualism leaves man in the degraded form, or type of the cunning serpent, or the wild beast. It is law, therefore, conformity to moral law, that constitutes manhood ; and it is by moral law that man is measured as to his manhood. It is not necessary at this stage to discuss the modern conception of ethics as moral law ; the higher ethics are not naturalistic, they are reflections from the inherent nature of man, and from religion ; only ethical teachers do not seem to understand the fact, that the glory that surrounds their order of thought is not derived from nature, or man, but from religion in its Mosaic forms ; from the prophets and their conceptions of righteousness and truth ; from the teaching of the Gospel of Mercy in Christ, in a very wide sense ; and from the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit. Ethical teachers seem to glory in law, and without doubt law, moral law, is very glorious, because it is the revelation

of the Will of God in the good, the Godlike ; but, it should never be forgotten that all law is Divine, and that it is the lawless that would destroy law. It is not easy to find the way through this labyrinth of thought surrounding men, as placed under the concept of law ; it is very difficult to rise above the popular use of the word, and to fix the thoughts upon what is truly spiritual law, as the Will of God. In the realm of experience, and of empiricism, the word is commonly used as applied to causes and effects as the order in which these take place ; to revelation as the law or word of God ; the Ten Commandments are named the moral law, though they are known to be words of warning telling men what they ought not to do ; the Beatitudes are a form of gracious law ; they express in their order the blessed state in which men should seek to live ; and the law of love, that sums up all moral law, is the ideal law. There are laws made sacred by authority, or tradition, laws of the State, criminal laws with penalties, and all these have within them conceptions as to an order that exists and that ought to be obeyed. It is not necessary to state that laws in this wide sense are not all equal as to authority and obligatory as to duty ; some of them may be lawless laws, others venial, others for a time, others for guidance and instruction ; and, very few of them to be conceived as laws, in the sense that the term law is now used as related to scientific order. In the hazy twilight of thought, and the bewildering maze of law, as used by men generally, there is no possible means of escape from confusion ; and thus, there is no doubt, that the inductive method of thought, as followed by scientific workers, has brought about a revelation of supreme importance. Of necessity, the scientific method was first applied in modern times to astronomy, chemistry, the physical and biological sciences of matter and life ; but the method has been found to be so fruitful in results that it has been applied to psychology, to ethics or morals, and to the Bible. In the realms of philosophy and of theology, in past times, the order of thought was deductive ; this method has fallen into disrepute with accurate thinkers, and thus the demand is for the scientific order of thought by the inductive method of reasoning.

The great value of the philosophy of the Unknowable, and of the philosophy of the Absolute, may be briefly summed up in this form. Accurate thinkers of opposing schools of thought were led to this definite conclusion, that all the thoughts of men, of a

complex kind, are related, or conditioned ; they are found to be linked together, thought with thought, idea with idea, image with image, until they are traced back to simple sense perceptions. When the analysis of the soul or mind is begun, and in a scientific manner carried out as far as this can be done, the result is that the relations seem to come to an end ; the mental philosopher then gives up the quest, he has reached the idea of the Absolute, and further he cannot go. If the problem is attacked from the side of nature by working up from the natural to the spiritual, it is found that the issue is similar ; the naturalistic philosopher says that he has reached the Unknowable, and further he cannot go. It will be observed that both systems of thought are purely intellectual ; they are dealing with knowledge in the realm of related order ; they analyse the thoughts of man and the processes of nature, and the conclusion reached is that all knowledge is that of relations, or of conditions, but the Reality, that certainly exists, and is the cause of all relations and conditions, is not, and cannot be, known within this circle of related thoughts. If this most important conception of philosophy is understood, and grasped with a firm, inflexible hand, then light will arise out of the darkness ; but if it is treated as of little consequence, as a mere metaphysical concept, as not worthy of particular study, then the result must be darkness, the turning of the back to the light, the return to the great desert, and the endless wandering in search of the light of truth. This matter is of such serious importance that it cannot be hastily passed over ; it is here that light and darkness, life and death, meet, and men ought to give this matter their most careful consideration. God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness ; but some men say God is all darkness ; He dwells in the darkness that is absolute and unknowable, and men cannot enter that awful darkness. Both these statements are true ; and yet they seem to contradict each other completely. Is there any means of understanding how the two thoughts can be harmonised, so that the pure light of truth may permeate and illuminate both ? As suggested, philosophers, mental or naturalistic, approach this problem from the intellectual stand-point ; the one analyses the mind of man, and the final conception is the Absolute ; the other analyses Nature, and the end is the Unknowable. Both have reasoned truly, as the problems they have studied appeared to them, and yet the end is darkness, not light. Why ? It is the physical creation that gives the answer ; the men have been dia-mag-

netic ; they have been at the wrong angles for the conception and the transmission of light ; and thus they were as and in the darkness ; the polarity of their systems of thought were not divine ; they did not harmonise with the Spirit of Truth, and of God ; thus the darkness was not in God, but in themselves. It is a great truth that natural intellectualism is spiritual dia-magnetism ; and it is necessary to burn and brand into humanity this great truth. That this end is being attained will not be questioned by those who have given this matter their careful study ; the Absolute, the Unknowable, is God, the Almighty, the Reality of all being ; and science has become the handmaid of religion ; a willing, gracious servant, an angel of light, in the House of God, putting the thoughts of men in their order in the light of truth ; causing Nature to change from absorbing darkness to radiating light ; and thus what men can see, in the light of science, is the glory of God, the Face of the Divine Saviour, and the eternal patient work of the Holy Spirit.

The point reached may be expressed in this way ; Nature and man can be analyzed in scientific order. With man the conception being that all he is, and all he thinks, is conditioned and limited by related conditions, subject to the intellect of man ; but at the root of being and thought there is the Unconditioned and the Absolute—God. With Nature the terms of thought are changed, there are known relations of thoughts ; the relations are the knowable, and beyond the knowable relations, which may all be placed in scientific order, as a book of Nature, there is the Unknowable—God, Reality. In logical order these are the results ; and thus as a matter of logic, of pure reasoning, man cannot reach, or find God ; in other words, men try to find God in His Works ; in His creatures ; in what man is in himself ; and nature is conceived to be, an intellectual order, and the quest is vain ; the image of God is not to be found ; it is not subject to the intellect ; and if the intellect will persist in this quest, under these conditions, the end must be dia-magnetism and darkness. It is remarkable that this line of study leads direct to another fundamental conception in the Kingdom of God ; and it is found that men cannot avoid the issue. They are compelled to believe in the Invisible, in the First Cause ; thus, in fact, the passage of death is made a doorway to life and hope. Agnostics do not call this faith in God, yet this is the literal truth ; they are compelled to admit that the fact exists, but they are not willing to believe what they are unable to doubt ; so

they confess ignorance, call themselves agnostics, shut their eyes, and go on their way assuming that the confession of ignorance ends the discussion.

It is thus assumed that the naturalistic, and the mental systems of thought are in substantial agreement; the two books studied intellectually in the main agree as to order, and the Absolute and Unknowable are conceived as the same Reality. This belief of the agnostic may be repellent to his spirit, and counted unworthy of serious consideration; but it is there, a factor to be recognised, and it will not be blotted out simply because the agnostic would ignore its existence. With the mental and moral philosopher, this matter of faith may take various aspects of thought; it may be almost agnostic, moral, or even Christian; but such conceptions would arise from the leaven of religion permitted to influence the thoughts. These deviations would not affect the evidence of the two books of Nature and Man, but simply indicate that the third book, Revelation, had brought into the order of thought, as religion, the moral and gracious Will of God. The Absolute, the Unknowable God, Being, Reality, is that Ultimate Thought, Sign, Name, where the intellect, even if angelic, fails to break through into the Presence of God; and, no matter how high the intellect may soar, or how deep it can descend, the result must be broken pinions and loss of power; the creature is limited; there is a boundary it cannot pass, and to attempt to do so means blindness, darkness, and death. Whilst this is true as to Absolute Being, the Ultimate, it is to be conceived as equally true that within the sphere of related thoughts, including in these experience, empiricism, and science, there is no limitation to the power of the intellect, when used as a means of gaining knowledge of relations, and of knowing what is true. Here, in this realm, the intellect may be a true angel of light discovering and setting in order all the works of God; but let it ever be remembered this is order only; it is deciphering the Will of God as written in the three books of Nature, Man, and Revelation. Let men go deep enough, get to the very root of these books; and in each and all it is God that is revealed to faith. It is possible for men to deny this; but if they do so, knowing all that these things mean, then it is useless to reason with them; they have wilfully chosen not to believe in God; and by intellectual reasoning their sore disease cannot be healed; neither can their darkness be changed into light.

Passing from this painful subject the order of thought would advance in this direction. The Absolute, Unknowable, God, is the intellectual Ultimate; this is matter of faith or belief; it is not man's choice; it is not man's creation; it is not what man takes hold of, it is what takes hold on man; it has held him with a firm grip all through the ages, and the testimony of every seeker after truth and righteousness, worthy of the name, would be, that the Power behind all powers, by His mighty power, was urging the seeker to try to find the truth, righteousness, God. The Ultimate it is believed is the Root, the Seed, the Life of all that exists and lives; and the Ultimate is Being. Let it be frankly recognised that these concept names are all words used to try to express this supreme thought of Being; the point to be noticed is that man is grappling with the supreme Fact that underlies, permeates, and surrounds, all that can be known as related thoughts by science. Take away this seed of thought, the result is Nihilism, in the sense that there could not be any Being, and there could not be any experience, empiricism, or science. It is belief, faith, that lies at the root of all three books; it is by faith that they become what they are; they live by faith; and living by faith they live in God, and God is the very life of their being. This is the Bible conception of this root-truth as expressed in the words "God is All in all." Leaving this question; the next stage of inquiry takes this form; the problem is metaphysical, it is on the borderland betwixt the Ultimate and Science; and it has to do with concepts which may be named related ultimates. These related ultimates, it may be said, are the results of science; it may even be suggested that so far science has been unable to break them down, or override them; they remain as the links betwixt the Ultimate and Science. The agnostic philosophy admits only one such related ultimate; it is named Force, and from this, as a seed or root, there is supposed to be evolved all the physical forces, matter in its manifold forms, physical organisms, the power to know, to store up thoughts known, to relate and correlate all thoughts as experience, empiricism, and science, and even to become ethical and altruistic man. This evolution is named Monistic; it arises from force, and the whole order of creation and man is naturalistic and mechanical; but whether the glory of this great work is to be given to Nature, as cause and manifestation, or to Man as interpreter; it is not worth while to consider. The difficulty with



this Monistic philosophy is that it is not found to be a workable hypothesis ; scientific thinkers are unable to accept it even as a theory ; and when the evolution rises to the realm of ethics then it is felt to be contrary to the general order. The objections raised to the hypothesis by science which are valid are these : Science has not been able to join that link, where matter or force is supposed to change itself into life ; it is maintained that the living can only come from that which lives, and all experiments have failed to produce the living from what is dead. There is another break in the chain of evolution, as betwixt living structures, seeing, and thought ; that power which sees and thinks ; and this is considered to be, by many who have carefully studied this matter, a much more serious objection to evolution than the link from force to life. The strongest objection, however, is when the moral and spiritual realm is invaded, and it is threatened with submergence by naturalism ; this is what ethical and spiritual teachers cannot endure, and thus they reject the evolution theory in this naturalistic and mechanical sense.

In place of this evolution from one principle, or related ultimate named force, it is conceived to be necessary, at the present stage of man's knowledge, to think of these related ultimates as seven in number, these being in their order, Force, Life, Spirit, Thought, or Memory, Intellect, the moral Nature and Grace. This division is not of an arbitrary kind ; the facts actually require this division, and the longer they are studied the stronger becomes the conviction that they are distinct and separate realms, or kingdoms of thought, and that each principle has its own order, to be understood and interpreted by its own science. The fact that they exist separately can be seen in the distinct realms of Force and Life in the physical creation ; that they co-exist in living organisms ; that they may be, as in conscious spirit and memory, dissociated as proved by dreaming, hypnotism, and clairvoyance ; that the lower creatures do not possess intellectual power to reason upon abstract problems and man does ; and, that in man the intellectual and moral may be sundered ; and, as for the realm of Grace, it is known as Revelation, the means of man's redemption from evil. These are the seven principles it is conceived that constitute creation as known to man ; and to these may be added an eighth, that of sacrifice, suffering, self-denial, as the life of grace in man, and the means of his restoration to God's likeness. It is to be understood that these principles can be

conceived as existing separately and individually, as matter exists apart from life and living organic forms ; but the rule is, that these principles or powers are conjoined in pairs, and thus force and life constitute an organic physical realm ; spirit and thought a psychic realm, as in the lower creatures ; intellect and moral power the realm of manhood ; and grace and suffering the divine realm by which there is redemption. It must be continually remembered that these related ultimates are the ultimates of science and philosophy ; they are unit powers ; it is from them that there is development ; they are, or become, realms of scientific order, and it is very important in study to keep these realms of thought separate. If this is not done, the result must be a fall from the scientific order of thought into empiricism and experience. It must follow that the Being, the Essence, of these related ultimates will remain unknown as to what they are in themselves ; in this sense, they are ultimates, facts to be believed, just as the Ultimate is the Object of faith and spiritual conviction. The difference betwixt the evolution theory, and this theory of development may be thus expressed : evolution assumes that from force, as the one related ultimate from the Unknowable, there is one continuous evolution without any break in the continuity, and without any intervention from outside the mechanism of nature ; and that natural selection, and other names of processes, are sufficient to account for the cosmos of the creation as it is known to man. It will be observed that Nature, in this theory, is everything ; the Unknowable is left outside creation and its evolution, and the thing itself, somehow, evolves and becomes all that it is, including man, the creature, and the glory of this naturalistic mechanism. The staggering difficulty against this theory, as felt by many, is that it entirely fails to satisfy the intellect of man, as to the problem of design and purpose, as so evidently made manifest in the works of creation and providence ; and in moral problems as relating to moral law ; that is to say the very work of science as defining order, as law is inexplicable upon such a theory. If natural selection, the survival of the fittest, and such terms have any meaning, are they to be conceived as the effects of fatalism or of blind chance ; and, if chance could produce what is so divinely wise and wonderful, then, this God as creator, or as being created, may be, who knows, the Unknowable, and may, after all, have something to do with the glorious universe, and its laws which men delight to study ? On the other

hand, the theory of development recognises to the full all the accepted results of science; these mean that scientific men, all working in their own spheres of labour, discover, and make known the order of nature, or what they conceive to be laws. Scientific men know that their labours are distinctively in the lines of cause and effect, of related conditions, of order, and their ultimate conception of order is, that it is law, and beyond this they cannot go. In a true and real sense the ultimate of science is order, law; and for science to attempt to step beyond law is folly. This is its true field of service; here it stands upright in the face of the universe, and when the order is discovered, then the assertion is made that this is law; it is truth; it is fact, and so it must be. It is conceived that in each of the realms mentioned, scientific order is possible, and that some day order and law in these will be known. It is not supposed that the related ultimates will be known as to their Being; but rather that these must be considered as belonging to the Ultimate—God. It is not denied that the development may be from Power, Force, the Almighty, up to the perfect manifestation of God in Christ upon the Cross of Sacrifice; because, seeing that God is conceived as One, this may well be the Fact as to the whole history of development. Along with this thought, and arising out of it, there follows the conception that there has been order in the development of the principles as to periods of time, and this is equivalent to the conception that intervention has repeatedly taken place in the upward development, or that there is an involution, as of germs ready to be made manifest in the creative process of development. In these matters it cannot be said that science has any standing; such problems are metaphysical and philosophical, having their roots in faith; the utmost that science could claim by its voice would be to state whether such conceptions are, or are not, in harmony with order and law. It is evident that in these matters, the evidence of the two books of Nature and Man, are not sufficient or efficient; the evolution theory is man's highest conception of Man and Nature; but the evidence and the philosophy are not accepted; they do not satisfy the moral and the spiritual in man, and thus the result is the rejection of this philosophy.

Before turning to, and receiving the testimony of the third book, as to the problem of development, it may not be out of place, in this twilight of science and philosophy, to inquire if

the light thrown upon the nature of man is sufficient to justify the expression of an opinion as to his moral nature, and his fitness to live a true, righteous, holy life ? The principles named, and their order of development, seem to make this clear, that man is so constituted, intellectually and morally, as to enable him to begin the moral life in innocence ; where there is no intellectual power, no conception of moral law, there cannot be any sense of duty or moral obligation. It may be assumed that the chaos without is in correspondence with the chaos within ; it is neither light nor dark ; and thus there is no obligation, or sense of sin and judgment. With the endowments of the intellect and the moral nature there is a great change, because the man is then capable of seeking for, finding, and knowing, truth, as order, and it is the moral nature that apprehends law and duty, and possesses authority to enforce obedience. This position is that of lordship ; all lower creatures, including the intellect, are subject ; and if they are kept in their place the result will be the moral life. The argument here is from the standpoint of man's unfallen nature, but is it not the common argument of mankind, as practical truth, with the firm conviction that only thus can men be or become righteous ? This thought is ingrained in humanity ; it is the moral man that should reign, not the knowing man, that is not righteous. This is a fundamental truth written within the souls of men ; this is the divine law written within men which will not be erased so long as any trace of manhood is left in their nature. Thus it may be said that man, whether in the state of innocence, or in the fallen state, is subject to the law of development ; but in the one instance, that of innocence, it is conceivable that the development could be direct, in the light, and ever upward, whilst with fallen man the development must be a long process of regeneration and renewing into the likeness of God. The conception here is that the innocent child could develop to moral manhood in a normal manner ; but the fallen child and man, even as a son of God, and as moral, strives to attain to the state of moral manhood. It is at this juncture that the books of Nature and man fail to supply the light required ; the ideal may be conceived as an Eden, a Paradise, or even as a Kingdom of God ; but the vision fails, for the gates of Eden are closed and men cannot pass by the seraph angels with their flaming swords of justice and judgment. It is in the contemplation of this subject that scientific thinkers are likely to find in their physical studies valuable thoughts which will tend

to illustrate this problem. The solar system, with its polarity and electro-magnetic motions, may be studied as one subject, the polarity of light and dia-magnetism, as another, and it would seem that electric-telegraphy by wire, or air, may also prove to be as parables of the Kingdom of heaven, to teach men by signs the things of the Kingdom of God, in the intellectual, moral and spiritual realms of thought.

The conception of law, all law, as conceived by science, is one of great importance in this study. It has been suggested that law is the ultimate conception of science as order, that beyond this science cannot go, the reason being that the relations of causes and effects are known, the thoughts exist in harmony, and all who know and understand such laws agree; they believe and know the facts to be true. With the conception that God is "All in all"; that Christ is the Word expressing, or revealing all; that the Holy Spirit takes of all that is in Christ in plan and purpose, number and design, and becomes the Medium of revelation; and, further, that God, Christ, and the Spirit, are thus made manifest, and revealed, in Nature and man, are wonderful conceptions, and they must change the order of the thoughts of men as to creation. It has been affirmed that the One secret man cannot discover, should not, with all reverence, seek to discover, is that of Being; in fact he cannot do so; and yet, strange to say, Nature, Man, and Revelation, manifest God to men. It is written "God was manifest in the flesh"; it is true that He is made manifest in every realm of science; but the issue of all the sciences is law, the manifestation of law and its harmonies. Here is the strange attitude of thought that men have reached by science; they have discerned this great truth, that all that is sensuous, of experience, and empiric is ever changing forms, and that what abides, cannot be destroyed, is law. It is not easy to grasp all that is involved in such a statement as this; and yet, when the subject is fairly considered, the conclusion is that it must be so. If Being is the object of faith, not of related intellectual knowledge, then it follows that what is the Essence of Being cannot be known; and, as the intellect can only deal with relations of thoughts, as to their order, or law, then it is law that is the revealed spiritual manifestation of God to spiritual beings, to those who are so developed as to understand law. Here again the circle comes round, the darkness is dispelled, man awakens as to a vision of light.

and glory from Heaven ; he asks, What is law ? and the response is, "The Will of God."

Is this to be conceived as a vision of truth, an ideal, or, in all soberness of truth, a transcendent fact, that men should set up before themselves so that they may become familiar with it ; and drink into their souls this living water from Heaven ; see Christ in it, and be transformed into His image ? The vision is there ; it is not one for wrangling about ; it is not one for children, or sceptics ; and yet even sceptics have seen such visions in the darkness ; they have told men that such visions as these are true ; but they have not seen in the light the face of Christ, the work of the Spirit, or the glory of God. It is amidst such conceptions as these that men struggle toward the light and the coming day ; they are beginning to realise the glory that surrounds that mighty angel clothed with light, known as science. It is by the light of science, order and law, that men will find truth ; it is law that is standard as truth ; it is law that must judge and condemn the lawless ; and Law, as regnant, is the Will of God. The vision of God, therefore, is not naturalism, force, or blind chance ; it is not arrogant man, with his dia-magnetic conceptions disowning, and dishonouring God ; it is God as immanent in creation ; it is the face of Christ, the Creator and Saviour ; it is the Spirit as Divine Wisdom in purpose, plan and design ; and the creation is not matter or dead mechanism, but the Will of God as Law, the Supreme Almighty Power throughout the universe.

In thus summing up past studies as bearing upon Nature and Man, it must not be forgotten that the light from Heaven, as found in the third Book, that of Revelation, has not been omitted ; it is by Christ, and His method of thought, that these have been transfigured ; they radiate His glory ; and they are His servants to do His Will. The thoughts will now be turned toward the Bible, as a Revealed History of the Will of God for the redemption of men, and a very brief summation, a review, may be found useful. As to the record of Creation, in Genesis, it may be suggested for consideration, that this vision or whatever it may be called, is a true revelation ; not as to the physical creation ; not of the scientific order of the details of creation ; and not a revelation as to the creation of unfallen, innocent man. There is in it a note of prophetic thought, as if the fact of conflict and struggle had been realised ; and thus it is given to man to subdue the

lower creation and to reign over it. The vision is the first in the Bible, and as has been indicated in the study of the days, the first day gives the key-note to succeeding days ; and the days, in their order throw light upon future history. But these thoughts must now be set up as standards of thought ; First, God is " All in all " ; and above and beyond all the thoughts of man. Second, Christ is the Word of God, the Ideal, the Arch-type of all created being, and the Saviour from the power of evil. As the Blessed One, the Reflection of God, the Name, He cannot be defined. He is Wisdom, Life, Light, Knowledge, Truth, Goodness, Grace and Sacrifice. These are not in Him mere names ; they are with power ; they have as names the universe of power behind them ; and through the Spirit they become divine power for creation and redemption. Third, all this power is conceived as in the Spirit ; in other words, taking the nature of man as the reflection of the truth ; it is in the Spirit that the Word becomes conscious as possessing power and Wisdom, Life, Light, Knowledge, Truth, Goodness, Grace and Sacrifice ; and these in the light of truth are the perfect wisdom of God. The Spirit is not represented as the hidden springs of thought ; these are in the Word ; but rather as the fountains of the living waters, and as the river of God conveying all blessing to the earth and to mankind. Fourth, absorbent nature and man groping in spiritual darkness, find themselves standing face to face with Being and with Law. The face of Christ is seen in glory as the rising Sun of Righteousness ; there is spiritual movement ; the Spirit in Christ and the Spirit in Nature and Man become responsive ; the dark earth becomes radiant in the light of scientific truth, and man falling on his face, covered with shame and confusion, unable to look upon Christ, cries out with a sob of sorrow and penitence, " My Lord, and My God."

It is thus man returns to the living Word ; more humble, a little wiser, a more docile disciple, a repentant prodigal son ashamed of the past, the far country, the riotous living, and the swine trough. Men may thank God for days of famine and hunger of soul, for these tend to penitence and reflection, and to think upon the Father's House, and the happy servants therein ; far better indeed to be the humblest doorkeeper in that house where Love dwells, than to revel in sensual pleasure in the palaces of kings and princes. In the latter there is lawlessness, ambition, pride, and vanity ; in the Father's House the light of truth, the

righteous life of goodness, the Love of God, and, above all, and the glory of all, Law as the Will of God. It is law, therefore, that is the supreme truth in the Kingdom of God ; and, what men have to seek after, as for hidden treasure, is the knowledge of God as conceived in the light of law. This is a statement few will deny ; but, at the same time, it is one that few will comprehend ; the masses of men are still in the school of empiricism ; and, from that realm of thought it is not possible to see the mountains of God as they may be discerned from the land of science. Experience and empiricism are the stages of childhood and youth ; they are self, or earth, centred ; and thus it is science alone, by law that can emancipate men from the bondage of the seen and the sensuous, and bring them into the possession of manhood, that land promised to Abraham 4,000 years ago. The vision of creation, of necessity, was revealed to children ; and it is a vision suitable for an inquiring child, or a studious youth ; but, when the man looks upon it in the light of law, as the Will of God, then it is a very great vision indeed ; it is the seed of all the visions of God ; and all the visions of God, in the most mysterious manner, spring up out of it and find their living roots in this divine revelation.

If, for example, the problem of the creation, or the becoming of man, is considered in the light of law, what an almost infinite vista of thought must arise before the mind in the light of the law of development. The order of creation is studied backward in time, and away beyond time there is the Potential Will of God, from whence all has been developed. Reverse the order of thought and let the attempt be made to follow the order of development ; the immense ages in which law operates to produce from physical chaos a cosmos in the inorganic and organic realms ; the development in the psychic realms in the lower creatures ; the stage where the intellectual and moral became manifest when light began to be radiant as truth, and the sons of God shouted with joy and gladness. Is it not necessary at this stage, in the light of the law of development, to ask one or two questions that bear upon what is known as the creation of man. The childlike belief of a special creation of man is, as a vision of faith, true and childlike ; it takes no cognizance of time ; it recognises the beautiful and sublime fact, "God said," and the work was done, the Will of God was accomplished. This is the Ideal and this is true ; but when man, in the light of science, speaks of



the Will of God, as law ; then, he draws in his breath, he looks around, and he wonders how he is going to apply this Will of God to the development of man, as created in the likeness of God. In the first place this thought must be impressed upon the mind, that this is not merely a new creation by law, as of what is unconscious and obeys ; it is a creation of an ideal, and of an ideal that has in it Godlikeness in truth and righteousness. Is it right to read the story of man's becoming, his development, in the light of Nature ; in the light of the individual babe, child, youth, and man ; and, in the light of the Bible, with its revelations as to the ever recurring method of Christ in the regeneration, redemption, and restoration of man to the image of God ? The reply might fairly be that these lines of thought are for man's guidance and instruction ; and, that, as matter of fact, these are the avenues by which the knowledge of truth is obtained. It is the ideal that is manifested as an ideal, not as perfect manhood in experience, empiricism and science, and this being so the question may be asked, when, or at what period, in time, did this ideal creation become manifest upon the earth ? Is it not true that when such questions are thus studied, the childlike story, though still remaining quite true, as a revelation to faith, is seen to move, to grow, develop, burst the bonds of word and sign, and the problem becomes law, the Will of God by the Spirit, and how that development would take place. To those who live in the realm of faith, the blessed childlike souls, this subject may not be in the least interesting, but to men who think that they have outgrown faith ; and who may suppose that they have seen a vision that transcends revelation, surely this must be a matter of interest worthy of consideration. It pleased God in the infancy of mankind, as related to the order of redemption, to reveal to His little children these thoughts about creation ; they have been accepted as true by the children of God, as literal truth ; and, unquestionably they have been of the highest service to mankind. In the course of the development of the ages, men began to think that they knew better, even than God, the truth about this matter ; they rejected His revelation, gave their own version of the story, threw ridicule upon the Word of God, and declared that it was not true to the facts. They thought that God was like themselves ; and, they were so deficient in spiritual vision, and, degraded by intellectual conceit, that they rejected the light from heaven, and conceived the thought that

the light they had kindled would enlighten the earth. In the light of law, as the Will of God, where can man fix that period in time when man began to be? What has been the order of his development from germ to manhood? What fact can man bring forward that cannot be embraced within the realm of law, and of development? It is really necessary that men should be careful to distinguish between the opinions of men and the laws of God; there are chronologies devised by men trying to explain what they conceive to be the facts; but the chronology of God is not the same. He does not trouble His little children, to weary them, with thousands, and milleniums, of years; but when they are prepared to consider such problems, then He will be there to give the necessary tuition they will require in His University of Divine Truth. In the light of these thoughts are Christians, in despair, to throw aside the Bible if they are told with all seriousness that there once existed a pre-Adamite race of men; that men have existed upon this earth thousands of years before the days of Adam; that their skeletons have been found, and that even the works of their hands have been traced? All these stories may be true and full of interest; but, in the light of law, and of the Will of God, they have no anti-Christian meaning; they may all come in, and find their fitting place in that period of development betwixt the ideal, the germ of manhood, and that manhood, when it became true, moral and responsible in the sight of God.

It may be well to notice at this point that in these conceptions of Nature, Man, and Revelation, there comes into prominence the following thoughts which may be said to be in harmony. In Nature as the result of science and philosophy, there is the Unknowable, or God; an Ultimate Force or Power, and related ultimates which are linked with the Ultimate, the Ideal. These related ultimates, as considered in the light of plan, purpose, and design, form a realm of Spirit power in wisdom; and the consummation of all these can be summed up in experience, empiricism, and science, as an abstract realm of thought. With man the aspect of thought is different, he looks out upon Nature and it appears to be All in all; he is himself the epitome, the ideal of all that Nature is; there is the mysterious All-wise Spirit as the Cause, the Revealer, of all plans, purposes, and designs; and there is the manifested creation as effect, revelation, and manifestation of the Will of God. In the revelation of crea-

tion in Genesis the order is, "in the beginning God;" with all that is involved in the first day; in the second day separation and heaven; in the third day, earth, seas, seed, fruit; and in the fourth day, sun, moon, and stars as regnant in power and glory. The symbols vary, but the thoughts are the same; and when there is written against the name of God, faith; against Christ, the Ideal, hope; against the Spirit, patience; and, against Creation, love, as the manifested result, it is felt that the facts are the same, and that it is the One Spirit of Truth that is revealing these harmonies of thought.

When the thoughts are turned to the generations of Heaven and Earth, and the question is asked What these mean? In what sense they are to be understood? and, whether they can be limited? it is felt that the problem is not one that man can limit, and it is doubtful if he can grasp the meaning, and the sense, in which the vision is expressed. The revelation is that of fallen humanity; and the story in brief symbols is that of the fall, redemption, and restoration of mankind. It may be taken for granted that only little children would accept, as literal truth, the desert, the man made from dust, the garden, the river, the trees, the talking serpent, the eating of the fruit as sin, judgment, mercy, and the curse upon serpent and mankind. The pictures are vivid, the symbols are suitable for the subject, and thus thoughtful men look beyond these, and try to understand what they mean. Are not the symbols Heaven and Earth, as words, all inclusive of all that is spiritual and carnal? If they are there, from whence do they come? They are to be found in the creation story, for Christ is the Word, He is Heaven, the Ideal of the Spiritual; and the Earth is the mother of all that lives upon the Earth and arises out of it. If this be so, then there is no limit backward in time to the vision; it is centred in Christ, and it points forward to the consummation of all things in the redemption of mankind. Although it may be said that there is no limit backward in thought as to the origin of Heaven, in another sense there is the thought that this vision has specially to do with fallen man and his restoration, for the symbol thoughts deal with the whole problem of redemption in an ideal form, and also in epitome as made manifest in history. Is it a prophetic vision as truth in symbol; or, is it a kind of mythological parable of the Kingdom of Grace? It is a true spiritual revelation of spiritual conditions, and spiritual actions, and thus men must

try to get beyond the symbols to the truths symbolised. What is the vision of the earth and fallen man, as seen from heaven, spiritually? It is desert, there is no man to be seen; and not until the mist and water from heaven falls, and there is inbreathing by the Spirit into the human form, is there breath of life and living soul? Where, and what is this garden of Eden? It is the Ideal; it is heaven; it is the soul of man; it is where the Spirit is; and it is where the fruits of the Spirit grow, and where the river of life is found to flow, and bring spiritual blessings to men. Is there no law, or limitation, within this garden? Assuredly there is; the Lord God, the Lawgiver is there; and, with the fullest freedom there is also restriction and warning, for it is not right that man should seek after both good and evil; and be unable to discern betwixt the good that leads to heaven and bliss, and the evil that degrades and destroys. What help did man receive so that he might develop and grow in knowledge? Was there not mother earth from whence his body came; and was there not the soul, the psyche, wherein the Spirit of God and the spirit of man dwelt? Why temptation, the serpent, the food, the pleasant things, the desire for wisdom, the open eyes, and to be as gods in knowledge? What is this but history, man ever falling, by these lusts; to be followed by nakedness, shame, hiding, sorrow, trouble, subjection, and base service. Still, men need not despair; the Lord God is greater than the serpent, evil; and, though sin and death may seem to reign supreme, the day will come when the serpent's head will be bruised; an appointed One will come for salvation; and men will unite in calling upon, and in calling themselves by, the Name of the Lord Christ.

In the light of law as the Will of God, the generations of Heaven and Earth are seen to be great revelations of Divine truth, which stretch from eternity through time onward to a consummation that is as a vision, but it culminates in "another seed instead of Abel whom Cain slew," and in the worship of God, the Lord. There are two distinct aspects of the vision, the one being ideal and in symbol; the other literal fact as history. There may be seen a similarity betwixt ideal and history, as if they were to each other as substance and shadow; and as if the family of Adam fulfilled the ideal in their own history. Thus the creation of Adam, and the birth of Cain; the garden in Eden, and the family and home of Adam; the inherent spiritual facts of right and wrong, good and

evil, and the sacrifices of Cain and Abel ; the helpmeet for Adam, and the Lord's remonstrance with Cain ; the temptation and fall of mankind, and the murderer Cain, the symbol sacrifice being Abel ; the coming of the Lord for judgment in Eden, and the judgment upon Cain ; the outcasts from the garden, with the life in the desert earth, and the miserable Cain, the vagabond, with the brand of murder on his forehead ; and the Lord God's care and protection over the outcasts from Eden and from the home of Adam. The literal story takes men a little further on the way than the ideal ; in the ideal there are set up the flaming swords to prevent return to the earthly Eden ; in the literal story the movement is away from the Lord to the city life, to increasing wickedness, to the pursuit of wealth, the enjoyment of music and pleasure, and to arts, and bloodshed. The vision is graphic in ideal and literal truth ; Heaven is very far away in the dim past ; the way through time is very dark ; the earth is very earthly ; the reign is that of the race of Cain ; there is a true sacrifice in Abel lying at the very foundations of the earth ; and there is a ray of hope, for there is that other One greater than Abel ; the Living One, in Whose Name all nations will worship God.

Is that first vision a true revelation of law, and of the Will of God ? Can men look upon it, compare it with the history of time, and be unable to perceive the awful, silent, persistent wisdom and power of God ? How terrible the thought that, lying unseen at the root of all being and all becoming, there is Law, and it is Law, the Will of God, that reigns in the Kingdom of Grace for salvation ; and over the realm of evil, as a mysterious Power to restrain, limit, and yet permit the manifestation of what is contrary to the Will of God. Can God be the author of evil in any sense ? The thought is outrageous ; it is law that is His Will, and evil is what is lawless ; what must be limited and restrained by laws higher than the moral, or what is involved in manhood. What a marvellous Divine truth is revealed in the thought that man is spiritually a god, like God ; and that in this gift there is involved freedom of the will to do right or wrong. If right then it is well, this is God likeness ; but if wrong, then how terrible the results ; there upon the very threshold of heaven lies, in symbol, the Son of God, the Sacrifice for sin, and men go forth heedless to reap the fruits of their lawlessness and wickedness. Truly, unless the Lord in His mercy and grace had kept alive the seed of grace upon the earth, this world had been as Sodom and Gomorrha. It has been the salt

of grace that has preserved the earth from destruction; and grace is law; the Will of God for salvation.

In the generations of Adam, of necessity, the aspect of the vision is changed; the Heavens and the Earth are in the past and have become pre-vision, and men find themselves, in a true and real sense, living in the atmosphere of that vision. In that vision there was the illimitable; in this of the race of Adam by Seth it is quite different, it is narrowed to a line of men, and to a book; and it is in this limited vision that men have to find the course of the river of life. Is the vision that of creation, or of recreation? It is of both, because the latter arises out of the former; they are both through Adam, the earthly, and it is out of the earthly, the natural, that there will be developed the heavenly and the spiritual. If this vision is, in a sense, limited to the narrow line of the earthly, it must be remembered that as pre-vision it reveals time and history; for the generations of Adam are, in epitome, those of mankind, as specially related to the realm of grace. Although the names and the men are pre-historic, they are the fathers of history; and their names and their successions may be traced in the Bible. Here also men may trace the record of law as the Will of God, that is to say, these men are as signs, and men require to study signs and history, so that they may apprehend in what way the Spirit of God has influenced mankind to bring about peace, comfort, justice, judgment, and a new heaven and earth. So far as men can perceive the root of humanity is Adam; but Adam is of the earth, thus without spiritual life. With Seth there is life, for he is the living put in the place of the dead. With Enos there is spiritual life, faith, and the worship of God. With Cainan there is the revelation of a possession yet to be enjoyed. With Mahalaleel men may discern the spirit of praise, of thinking upon and of reflecting, the thoughts of God. With Jared there is the conception of the nation and the kingdom, of government and rule. With Enoch there appears upon the scene the miracle and marvel of history, a consecrated man; one who walked with God; who was not to be seen by men; and who went from among men to be with God. With Methusaleh the symbolism of thought is complex; there is the dart that pierces; suffering, sorrow, sacrifice, and yet there is the long life, with the vision from Adam to Noah. With Lamech there is a kind of destruction, as by intellectual analysis, there is a hope realised, and there is the vision of rest and

comfort in the future. With Noah comes not rest and comfort to begin with, but the revelation of great wickedness ; and of justice and judgment. It is not difficult from this pre-vision to trace the vision of history, as it is known to men ; these men and their names are prophetic of historic development ; and they are spiritual generations in the Kingdom of Grace. Thus Adam, the root, is the rejected ; Seth, the living, the appointed, the new life, in mankind ; Enos as prefiguring Abraham and faith ; Cainan as representing the fathers, and Canaan, Joseph and Egypt. Mahalaleel, as pointing to Moses, Mosaism and the Desert. Jared, the ruler, as indicating the nation and kingdom of Israel. Enoch, the consecrated, the ever-living with God, represents the Christ. With Methusaleh, the long-lived, there is the vision of the eighth, the sacrifice of Christ, and the sorrow of mankind. With Lamech and Noah there is the Christian age of the Spirit with the far off vision of the wickedness of men, the judgments of God, and the millenium of peace.

In the light of law, as the Will of God, this vision as of an organic mankind, and as conceivable in the individual man, is not easily defined. There is an ideal, but man cannot reach it, for it is not to be found in nature, and he cannot read the mystic book of his own being. The spiritual development is like the ideal evolution theory ; and the thinker, upon naturalistic lines, might be supposed to take this story of the generations of Adam as an illustration of his theory. The story seems to be naturalistic, there is no special reference to the Divine interpositions, except in the case of Enoch, thus it is the visible order, the man, his type, and development that are specially considered. But the Divine and spiritual cannot be for ever shut up, ever absorbing light from Heaven, and never reaching the glowing radiant state ; with Lamech the veil of the flesh is rent, and in his son, Noah, he discerns rest, peace and the new order. This same mystery is the mystery of the complex being of every man ; he may be totally ignorant, knowing no more about his physical, psychical, moral and spiritual being than one of the lower creatures ; or, he may have begun to study, in the light of science, the miracle and the mystery of his nature ; but the confession must be made that man has to be summed up in the terms of law, and as law, he is truly a book of God, a Divine wonder in wisdom and power. Surely intelligent men will not question the truth of this fact ; the mystery does not destroy the miracle ; it is there, and it is the Word of God, the expression of His Will. It is not the question of the mindfulness of God for

man that is involved here : it is the mystery that man is, in a sense, an epitome of the mind of God ; an ideal, a glory of God, which man does not comprehend ; and which he does not honour as he ought. How debasing is that conception of man from the naturalistic stand-point, a thing of Nature and of chance, as compared with this ideal that man is the image of God as Law and as His Will. Truly men require to be more mindful, thoughtful, in studying these matters ; they are creatures truly ; but who can understand, or express, this hidden glory of a creature made in the image of God ? Where is this ideal found ? It has been buried for centuries in the book of Adam ; in Enoch the seventh, the perfect man ; the Ideal, the Man, lived upon earth 2,000 years ago ; the Spirit of Christ has been changing men into this ideal for ages and they knew it not ; and the day is coming when mankind will be transfigured into the same glorious ideal. Is the vision too wonderful to be true ? Men may well be excused for thinking so ; but if the vision is not true, and not to be realised, then why has there come to men such a revelation as this in the light of Law as the Will of God ?

It is a strange coincidence, or, a portion of the Divine order, that the end of one vision of truth, or generations of God, fits into the succeeding generation ; and yet in time they seem far apart, for the one is at the end, and the other is a new beginning. This marvellous living man in a physical body is linked to, united with, a portion of the unseen power named the Spirit ; and the spirit in man, and its psychic home, is even more wonderful than the physical body with all its complex organs. It is the generations of Noah, with the vision of the Flood, salvation by the Ark, and judgment by the great waters that raises these questions ; and the problem for men is what these mean, in the light of law as the Will of God ?

In the order of development, the vision is that of the Spirit, and as spiritual it is worthy of careful consideration. In the order of generations this is the third ; and here the links of thought that meet in the Spirit require to be studied. The vision is the old world, the pre-historic, the days of the giants in strength and in evil doing ; it is a spiritual vision occupying a year, or a cycle of time, and it is divided into several periods of seven days and two periods of forty days. At the beginning evil is regnant with a high hand throughout the earth ; but in Noah there was found grace ; he was just and upright in his actions ; and, like



Enoch, he walked with God. It is not necessary to enter into the debatable question as to a physical flood of waters, and the conception of wicked men as drowned and destroyed in the days of Noah : the important matter is to remember that the Bible is a spiritual book, the work of the Spirit of God, teaching men spiritual truths as to the order of development of the kingdom of Grace upon this earth ; and at this stage the Spirit in a special manner gives to men a true vision of God as to the perfect safety of the faithful, the glorious supremacy and victory of the Kingdom of Grace, and the judgment upon, and overthrow of, the powers of evil. Can there be any doubt as to the fitness of the vision to illustrate the facts ? In Scripture the wicked are often compared to the waters and mighty sea billows ; in their raging and madness evil-doers are like the great sea, they are in a state of fluent chaos, mutually opposing and destructive ; and, in the final vision of the overthrow of evil, the manifestation of the Kingdom of God, there is no sea to be found ; it is the cosmos of heaven, not the chaos of earth and the seas. In the vision of the Spirit is there any risk of the wreck of the Ark of God and danger for those in the sacred place ? The Ark of Grace cannot be wrecked ; it rides triumphant over all seas ; and the saved ones cannot be lost, for the everlasting arms are around them, they are in the secret place of the Most High, they lie very near to the heart of God, and they are the special care and treasure of the Holy Spirit. These truths are not visions of the night ; they are not merely floods of waters, an Ark and its occupants, and the destruction of evil-doers ; they are to be interpreted in terms of Law as the Will of God for the Salvation of men ; the mysterious work of God as discernible in the withdrawal of the Spirit from men ; the terrible consequences of evil ; the pains and penalties that follow outraged Law, and of sinning against the holy Will of God. Men, childlike, conceive the thought that the Lord God comes forth as a terrible Judge to punish men by His Sword of judgment, and there is symbolic truth in such a conception ; but have they considered what the awful effect would be if men were simply left alone by the gracious Spirit, and permitted to work out their own destruction ? This is a vision to be considered in the light of Law, and it is fearful and doubtful in the extreme ; it is the valley of awful darkness ; it is where sin and death reign ; it is to be without God and without hope in the world, a chaos and darkness incomprehensible.

In the light of these thoughts, and of Law as the Will of God, it may be profitable simply to glance for a moment at an aspect of this question which has occupied the thoughts of men, and about which there has been much discussion. There may not be much doubt about the fact that there was a great flood ; and, that the traditions among many peoples and nations support this as a pre-historic truth, in which, as a rule, they are found to agree. The matter of spiritual interest, and as a matter of spiritual fact, would seem to take this particular form. Assuming it to be true that there was a flood, local or otherwise, before the dispersion of the race of men two questions would be asked : first, whether there were any survivors apart from Noah and his family ? And, second, who were the survivors ? It would appear that the tendency of discovery is to show that there were survivors, and the Bible indicates that before the Canaanites took possession of Palestine it was inhabited by a race of giant men that survived the conquest by Joshua. The real point at issue here, as spiritual truth, is not the survival of the Cainite branch of the Adam family, or any of the families or tribes of the family of Seth and his descendants ; it is this, assuming that they did survive, and that the Scythians, Tartars, Chinese, and other nations and peoples are these peoples, then what explanation can be given of their state of savagery, or semi-barbarism, as compared with the advancement of other nations in what is known as civilisation ? The facts here seem plain enough, there are savage races, such as the aborigines of Australia and others, that as to civilisation appear to be little above the lower creatures in their habits of life, although it is not doubted that they possess, in rudimental forms, intellectual and moral powers. There are other races, semi-barbarous, still low as to civilisation ; there are stationary nations, such as the Chinese, which remain for centuries in the same condition, and there is apparently no motive power within the people to raise themselves above their environment. It may be assumed that the Chinese people have a form of patriarchal religion, with the emperor as king and priest over the whole empire, but in reality they are an ethical people, practical and peaceful, and their sage, Confucius, is the highest type of their development as a people. But it cannot be said that their wisdom can be compared with that of Greece ; their method of law and government with that of Rome ; or their religion as to truth and righteousness with that of the Jewish people. Their civilisation has crystallised

round the family and home, and, if reverence or even worship of the dead is their idolatry, this very ideal has been to them a bulwark of strength, because there lies at the root of it the Fear of God, the Father of all His children. The lesson to reverence parents and the memory of the dead is not to be lightly esteemed, for this commandment is with the promise that unto such there shall be given the blessing of long days, and possession of the land that is their portion. The conception that arises here has its roots deep down in the problem of development; it is the Spirit of God that works all in all; there are gifts of the Spirit given to men; they come as ideals; they are divine lessons for men to learn, and men, as intelligent beings, have the opportunity of utilising such gifts, and of growing into them, so that they may become more God-like, and thus prepared for the next stage of development when it appears. If Cain and his seed are taken as an example, his spirit was enmity to God; his sacrifice was not acceptable because of that spirit; he cherished the spirit of hatred, and the end was murder and banishment from the presence of God. This is his stage of spiritual development; the Spirit does not strive with him in new revelations; he has received gifts and graces and they are not withdrawn; but out he goes into the darkness; his hand is against every man that is a stranger, and every stranger is an enemy; and in this way the spiritual development fails. Is the man spiritually alive, or is he dead? The germ of life may be there, but there cannot be conscious spiritual life or advancement in the knowledge of God and what is spiritual. It may be possible to go round all the nations, and in this way put them to the test as to their stage of development; they rise so far, they become perverse and rebellious, the Spirit leaves them in that state, and there may be not merely want of growth, but decadence and the falling away from ideals once possessed. Is not the history of the Jewish people from Abraham to the fall of Jerusalem, and the later history of the Jews, a volume upon this subject very fully written, that all may read and understand? What is the story of Renaissance and Reformation in Europe but another volume illustrating the same truth? The Spirit is ever with men, this is one great truth never to be forgotten; the Spirit is ever in men working for their development; and, from time to time, as the Spirit wills, in harmony with the laws of development, there comes a fresh wave of spiritual power, a new order, a something arising out of, and yet different from, what

has gone before. The gracious lovers of truth and righteousness are carried forward on the top of the wave into the new Kingdom ; the laggards, traditionalists, conservatives, who live in the atmosphere of the past, are left behind ; they become fossilised organisms ; the Spirit of Life and Truth has been despised and rejected ; they retain the old familiar type of the past ; the new type of life reigns ; and in that realm there is increasing love of truth, of righteousness, and the development of the gracious purpose of God upon the earth.

It is such a vision in the realm of law as the Will of God that appears to men in the generations of Noah ; the realm is that of the Spirit and spiritual, and thus the limitless vision as to the future and of spiritual development. With the vision of " the generations of the sons of Noah," of necessity, the spiritual aspect of thought is changed ; in the great world it is the living nations and peoples, the powers that conquer and reign, they are the great powers, and it is through, in, and by them that there is development in the earth and in the Kingdom of Grace. In the man the problem involved is that of the intellect, the moral nature, and the realms of grace and sacrifice ; and in a true sense they will be found to synchronise with each other in the order of development. It will be observed that with the descendants of Japhet there is the brief record of names, lands, tongues, and nations, and as these are traced upon maps the conception arises that they have their origin and centre near the Black Sea ; the one branch moving westward to Greece, Rome, the West, the far West, America, and eastward to India, Burmah and China ; the other moving eastward under the sway of Russia, through Siberia to China, Korea, and Japan. The name Japhet means extension ; and it would seem as if this family could find no limit to the extent of its empire ; the meeting place is the far East and they face each other in Japan and China to-day as rivals for the empire of the world. With the family of Ham—the dark, or black—there comes in the story of Nimrod and Babel, Asshur and Nineveh, the great Egyptian power, and the Canaanite ; and these are the great world powers of the past as related to the Bible and ancient nations. With the family of Shem there is the Name that is sacred ; a vision of division ; and, in this family the mystery of religion is carried onward into the history of mankind. There was at one time a unity of families as of one people ; at least on the Noah branch ; but through pride, and ambition in rulers

and the departure in religion from spiritual worship into idolatry, the result was strife, contention, hatred, war, dispersion and confusion, and thus the historical family of Noah was spread abroad on the face of the earth. The conceptions that arise from these generations are the extension of the rule of Japhet; the record in time—a black one—of the sons of Ham; and the Name in, and division of, the sons of Shem. It is Eber that the finger of destiny points to as the child of the future, and the source of a new development; and it is in the Hebrews, as a people, that the sacred Name is hidden. If this is applied to the great masses of men on the one side, or to the affections and desires of the soul of man on the other, then these are what men use for their ambitious plans and purposes; they are what man tries to build with, to attain ascendancy and supremacy in the earth.

With the generations of Shem, as viewed in the light of Law, as the Will of God, what can men see of the purposes of God, or of the method of Christ? They may see the past vision of the great flood, and the beginning of a new era of thought. The days of chaos and darkness is, in a sense, past; there is a power in the earth that has been awakened to living active labour, and it is the generations of this power that men are called to study. What is this power; is it intellectual power pure and simple, or is it the power of the intellect as sent forth by the Spirit of Grace, to seek for, and haply to find, the order that exists in the works of God? Not intellect as graceless, but intellect as under Grace, directed by the Spirit to enter into conflict with the intellect that is in the serpent. There may be many ways of looking at this complex problem, and this is one. The intellect was not idle in the dark ages that are pre-historic; in the light of nature men used their natural powers; they thought and reasoned; they gave forms, signs, and symbols to their thoughts; they projected beyond their own souls, where the concepts arose, those abstract symbols that men have found buried as hieroglyphics in Egypt, as cuneiform tablets in Mesopotamia, and as letters in Phoenicia. Away far back in the dark pre-historic ages, there were men who were seekers after truth; and it was from the chaotic masses of thought in their own souls that they began to form letters and words, signs and symbols, that could be mutually translated and understood. This cannot be conceived as child's play; for this transcends the visible, the image, and the comparison of image and vision; it is to reconstruct these.

and to set them up as outward signs, like, or without any likeness to the thoughts. The Egyptian and other pre-historic forms of signs seem to develop from things seen, and the things that are like; but the arrowhead and other signs do not seem so clearly to follow this order of thought. What is of importance here as bearing upon the intellect is this, that before, or during the era of Shem, these powers were made manifest among men; there were books written in clay, and upon stone; there were libraries of such books, and they were carefully read, studied, and stored away by the men in that age that is surrounded by darkness. The libraries were buried in the dust; they were literally dead; the languages were unknown, and the signs completely forgotten. The intellect is not life; the intellectual labours of men are not the living; they may be mere fossilised thoughts or concepts that no one can read or understand; full of meaning, or meaningless; but this depends upon the living and what the living can see, read, and understand, when the signs are observed. It is a strange thought that just as the light of the day of intellectual grace in the West began to break upon the world, these libraries of the past began to die, to be buried, and to be covered with dust. They belonged to a past age; the record was closed, the judgment had come, the books were closed, and the problem to be studied then was not the past but the future. This mystery of the ages is not that of the Bible only; it is the same story in every individual man; and in a still wider and marvellous sense of the whole realm of Nature. How very brief the record in the first eight chapters of Genesis; how incomprehensible the mystery of the infant in the womb, and the little child; and how marvellous the record in rocks and geologic formations, in life, its structures and types; in living creatures in all their diversities of spirit power; and of that psychic memory that receives, conceives, and conserves in the darkness the past with all its writings. This is indeed the very realm of mystery; and this mystery is all the more wonderful because, at the end of the ages, men are found in the light of Law, as the Will of God, deciphering and interpreting all that past, so long hidden in the darkness. It is a great mystery that in the light of truth men have entered the great grave of the past; they found in it angel forms clothed with light and glory but Him they did not see; their eyes were holden; for He cannot be seen by the intellect of men; it is the living that see the Living,

and He reveals Himself in the breaking of the living bread ; where sin, death, and the grave are not to be found.

The problems in the generations of Shem are turned toward the ages to come ; each name is as a generation to be studied, deciphered, interpreted, and understood. They are pre-vision and prophetic ; they are from Chaldea and before Chaldea, in the Name ; they are in the Fathers, in Egypt, in Israel, and even in Christendom ; and they find men standing, facing a new day of Grace, and asking what there is involved in Shem, Terah, Abram, Nahor, and Haran ?

The generations of Terah are Abram, Nahor, and Haran. It is Haran that represents the true spirit of intellectualism, and he died before his father in Ur of the Chaldees. That is so ; the intellect that is divine and gracious did not live long ; and the second generation, Lot—the veiled—is known by his history in Palestine, Sodom, the rescue from the kings, his daughters and their sons, Ammon and Moab ; and they are a parable in the Kingdom of Grace to be carefully studied. Abram's wife was named Sarai ; and the wife of Nahor was Milcah the daughter of Haran. Terah and his family left Ur to go to Canaan, but they did not reach the land of promise ; they lingered by the way in the land of Aram, they found a home at Haran, and in that land Terah died. All this is history, and it is also a parable as prophetic thought. Here it is necessary to pause and think ; and to raise the question whether at this point there is a break in the sacred record ; and if what follows may be considered as one of the most remarkable revelations to be found in the Word of God ?

The meaning of these questions, conceived in the light of Law as the Will of God, would take this form of inquiry. In the past, the conception has been that the story of the life of Abram is considered as the generations of Terah ; in a sense this is true, for Abram is the son of Terah ; but there appears to be a sense in which the revelation rises far above Terah, and the sixth generation, for here, silently, unexpectedly, there rises as by a great leap a revelation that is from the human to the divine. In other words the simple words, " Now the Lord had said unto Abram," breaks the link with Terah and Haran ; and the true generations revealed are not the sixth, but in Abraham, they are the seventh ; and in Abraham and Isaac, as priest and sacrifice, the eighth. The method of the revelation is what ought to have been expected ;

these generations are still as in the womb of time ; they have no existence apart from Terah, but this is the birthplace ; and no man can tell whence, or when, this child, Faith, was conceived into the womb of the world. The vision is truly mystic ; the time had come to make the manifestation ; and yet it is not something altogether new, for it is what the Lord had been saying to men during six generations ; it is here that the Voice becomes audible, and there is a man prepared to listen to the Voice, and to respond in spiritual power and wisdom. The position, as related to Abraham here is not changed, because former conceptions have all been that Abraham is a true type of Christ ; the detail here is that the Divine, the Spiritual, cometh not with observation ; it is in the midst, and men cannot perceive it ; the Man comes upon His pilgrim journey to sojourn among men, and no one sees the marvellous Vision of the Son of God, clad in the garments of humanity. The great importance of this revelation in Abraham may now be more correctly appreciated ; the three lines on the three sides of the square may have been radiant with Divine glory through all the ages ; but the fourth line was there all the time also, only it was absorbent and dark ; men crossed and re-crossed it many, many times ; and it never occurred to them that the mystic Vision was actually beneath their feet. But why did this mystic Vision of Faith not come sooner ? For the simple reason that men were not prepared to receive it ; there was no seed-bed, in which it could live ; and yet line upon line, blessing upon blessing, had fallen upon men ; the Kingdom of Grace was there ; the plan and purpose had been pursued steadily ; and at last men were to be privileged to see the golden line of grace stretching from Adam to Abraham, Abraham to Christ, and from Christ to the end of the ages. But men may think and say, Is not this mysticism lost in visionary ideals ? How can such things be ? Under what form of thought are they to be placed ? Are they analogies, or previsions ; or prophetic ideals ? Are they natural, or spiritual, and by what means will men be able to find out if they are true and real ; or if they are visions that must wither away under the searching light of science ? The answer must be that the interpretation will come through law as the Will of God ; and thus men will require to be careful, patient, and wise, in spiritual thoughts, ere they take the step that will lead to decision upon a matter of so much importance for mankind.

It is not necessary to enter into details to prove what is here



suggested ; the proof is not to be found here ; this is not the critical stage of development in history ; all that men are called to do is to open their eyes and see Abraham ; to listen and hear what the Lord has said by him ; to lift the eyes to heaven, and see the star of faith shining in glory ; and to perceive a glorious shining way of light from heaven to earth, and upon the earth, all through the ages. From the days of Abraham until now that star has been radiant with spiritual glory ; but men must not expect to find the sun and noonday brightness here, for if they did they would not see the star, and, strange to say, they would be blind and unable to see the Sun of Righteousness and the Light of Truth. If all these thoughts are understood, that are covered by symbol forms, and the right stand-point gained, then it will not be difficult to follow the line of thought as it is revealed in Abraham and his life. The incidents may be followed in their order, and the great spiritual events in history, as spiritual concepts, compared with them, and in this way the retro-visions, or pre-visions may be studied. (1) The Call is retrospective, not limited to place or time ; it is summed up in the thoughts that life and blessing are not natural but spiritual ; and it is the spiritual faith that makes the distinction betwixt the state named blessed, and the condition that is cursed ; and it is by faith that all the families of men on the earth will be blessed. Abraham obeyed this Divine Voice, he went forth from Haran, and entered the land of promise. This is the germ seed of all the visions of faith, and all the later visions are involved in it ; this is the first stage of the journey, but unless this great act of renunciation is taken, the end cannot be reached. (2) The Land, Sichem, Bethel, the altars, the sacrifices are all signs ; and by these the Land is confirmed to the seed of faith. This vision may cover the generations of Adam or Noah, or of any man ; it is possession by faith and grace of all that is promised, even when the earth is possessed by the wicked. (3) The visit to Egypt, with all its details, brings in the contrast of the world power, and the household of faith ; the risk to religion, and the danger to faith by intercommunion with the world. This vision may cover the period of the uprising of the world powers from Shem to Babel, and the perversion of religious forms of worship among men. It is the great era of self-assertion in the spirit as compared with meekness and gentleness. (4) The story of the strife of the herdmen and the separation of Abraham and Lot may fall in with the dissensions at Babylon, the confusion of tongues

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Rebekah as pointing to the New Testament times and the union of Jew and Gentile as Christians in the Christian Church. (16) The offspring of Faith is not limited to Jew and Christian ; there are many others, children of the great Desert, who trace their spiritual life, as one in God and Christ, to Abraham, the father of all the faithful. (17) There is a vision of a period when faith as understood by men will die, pass away, be buried out of sight. Is this the pre-vision of the age of science when the spiritual will dominate over the natural ; when there will not be any shadow of pre-historic or historic faith ? The Sun of Truth will be at the zenith, to go down no more ; and grace, faith, and truth will be radiant in perfect truth as living in the light of the Faithful, Truth of God. (18) The period is that of blessing, of all kinds of blessing in Christ ; for the end is peace, and men are found content at the well of Lahai-roi, that is at the well spring of the Life eternal in Christ the ever-living.

This is a very brief sketch of the spiritual thoughts that can be discerned in the life of faith as revealed in Abraham. It is a great ideal vision from beginning to end ; and no matter what way men study the story, as biography, vision of the Spirit, prophesy, analogy, or as the mere synchronisation of events, there is in it the Divine, and it is the Divine, the Spiritual in Abraham that men are called to study. It is not the pilgrim father from Ur to Canaan, and life of faith that seems now so strange. Men have become familiar with the story, and thus they fail to appreciate the beauty, simplicity, greatness, and grandeur, of the man in whom faith became an incarnate creation. It is the Faith in such a man, at such a time, that is the great wonder ; it is a new creation of God, or the shadow of the glory of it as it dawns upon the world. There is not only that line of glorious light that gives a reflected light to history and time, there is also an ideal that subsists in all nations, and around which all nationalities are formed. The ideal had been degraded and desecrated by Nimrod, and similar rulers, and the issue was the glory of kings, gods, and the submission of men to tyrants, who could only be compared to beasts of prey and merciless destroyers of the human race. The ideal in Abraham is the man, the land, the nation in its unity, and the Kingdom true and righteous ; and away beyond the kingdom, the Divine King, the sacred land of truth, the earth and righteousness, and one people, all under one King, the Lord of the whole

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watched the long struggle of the ages and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom ; and, at last, they are impelled to say that the day of Salvation draws nigh, for they see the rosy dawn tip the mountains, and these signs are radiant and glorious, they are revealed by Law, and men know that Law is the Will of God.

From the day of Abraham the world was as a new world ; it had undergone a great change, for there had appeared among men not a speaking, walking shadow, like Enoch, but a man like God in the image of Christ. An ideal of what man ought to be, and what he ought to expect, had dawned upon the world ; in fact, Heaven and earth were much nearer to each other ; they were within speaking distance, and Faith was the medium of communication. It is not conceived that there was no faith in the world before the days of Abraham ; but rather that Faith and Grace had no permanent abiding place, no shrine consecrated to God ; and no man could be found who embodied the ideal of what living faith ought to be. Abraham is this type of Christ, as the ideal revelation of grace from God by faith ; and in Him there is foreshadowed that realm of Grace and mercy to men which can only reach them through the narrow avenue of the life of faith. By the natural and the spiritual the same truth is now made manifest before men ; there is no true life of man without faith ; to lose faith is to lose spiritual life ; and to regain faith is to gain the new life, and to be re-united to God in Christ. These truths are not to be conceived as theological dogmas of the faith ; or, as in any way allied to historic forms of traditional worship ; the fact is plain enough that they break away from such conceptions, as the results of the wisdom of men, and declare that this revelation in Abraham is a great ideal of the realm of Grace by faith. Learned men throw but little light upon this subject ; they may well return to a similar simple conception of what faith is, and the ways by which faith works, to illumine the pathway of life so that men may draw near to God, in any place, and at any time, in spirit and in truth, in that realm of development in which they find themselves. By Abraham it is affirmed that the way back to God is by faith ; that in reality there is no other road ; that there is no difficulty in finding the way ; it is actually found in pictures in the eyes ; heard by sounds in the ears ; it pulsates in the actions of the heart ; it is the very life and breath of man ; and if he is faithless, then he is so because he will not believe ; it is because he is

lawless and will not respect and obey law ; in fact the man's will is set up against, athwart, at right angle to, the Will of God, and thus darkness, sin and death.

It is not suggested that the life of faith in Abraham is perfect ; all that is meant is that as truly as the beam of an electric light can pierce the darkness of night, so this light from heaven is continuous from the Light of Glory in Christ, the Ideal, to Abraham ; that through Abraham it flashes through the darkness to Christ ; and that from Christ, by the Spirit, it flashes through the darkness of space to the Eternal ; if this is to be conceived as a circle the ends are linked together and the light electric becomes radiant ; if as a square then the square is an enclosure ; it is the House of God, and it is in Christ full of light. It is with such a conception as this that the thoughts are turned to the other series of developments as unfolded in the book of Genesis ; but they do not now appear to require particular study ; it is in the light of faith they live and come into being ; the way of faith is the highway for the King, the pathway of light ; and they are the servants of the King, and of the King's sons, on this journey through the darkness. In the generations from Noah to Isaac the conception, the ideal that is being developed is that of hope, not a mere abstract concept, but a true living spiritual reality ; and, the more spiritual the believers the better able will they be to apprehend what is involved in the ideal. As suggested, the generations of Noah are those of the Spirit ; it is by the Spirit that there is vision ; and, it is the spirit of man that is to be the seer. This implies that the vision in Abraham has been seen if only in natural, or in telescopic order, as very near, or far off ; the reality being that the light of faith has been seen ; it has been translated into hope ; and it is the realisation of the hope set before the soul that is the problem of the second series of the generations. The world is now conceived as a world saved from the great flood of evil ; the earth is possessed that it may be redeemed ; it is the Spirit, conceived as the Name, that is carrying on the great work of Grace in ways men cannot understand ; and, it is the new creation, and the new ideal in Abraham that is the hope of, and in, the soul. But how is the hope to be realised ? The reply is that this secret lies hidden in Ishmael as a stage on the way ; and the hope is to be found in the land, the nation, and the Kingdom of Israel in Isaac. The hope is not vague ; even in Abraham it is the land, the nation and the kingdom ;

and upon these matters may not men expect guidance from the princes of Ishmael and the sons of Jacob? The vision of faith has receded from the spiritual and moral realm into the psychic; but there is left in history a vision of hope, true and faithful, within the souls of men.

With the third series of generations the starting point is Shem the end is Jacob and Joseph in Egypt, and with him the family of Israel. This series is that of a higher development, it is intellectual in its order, moral and spiritual in its issues, and thus the problems it contains are much more complex and far-reaching in their results. The hope that is in the heart is analysed, and the faith that is in Abraham is scrutinised, with this result: that the vision of faith is not now so near, or such a spiritual ideal. There is a hope kept alive, but it is the land promised, and the lordship over the land and over brethren; but to Esau and Jacob the spiritual glory has faded, the natural and the carnal are in the forefront and not the promises of God for mankind and blessings upon the faithful. In Esau, Jacob, Saul, and the kings of Israel and Judah, there is traceable degradation in the spirit; they have faith of a kind; they cherish a hope for Israel; they learn patience; and yet, the result is not blessing but envy and hatred in the brethren; and strife, worldliness and idolatry in the kings. The provisions are unlike those in Abraham; the men have got out of the way of the life of faith; the line of life has vanished out of sight, and there is no mystic vision found in Israel. The generations of Esau and of Jacob, as seen in the family, and in the nation, walk by sight not by faith; and, yet, there are exceptions, for Joseph dreams dreams that have spiritual significance; he is taught how to interpret the dreams of other men; and it is through dreams, visions, that the world is saved in the times of famine. It is Samuel the seer that trims the lamp of truth in the tabernacle and teaches men the way of righteousness and just judgment; and, it is as seer, prophet of God, he is servant of the King and King-maker in Israel. This vision is very long; it is the realm of patient endurance; and, strange to say, the provision in Jacob, in Joseph, in Judah and Israel seem to end in a lost hope and want of faith in God; for the end of the generations in Genesis is Egypt; and, in Israel, Nineveh and Babylon. But these are eclipses of faith, not its destruction, for history speaks of Moses and redemption; and of Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Restoration. This

kingdom of patience seems to have no end, for even in the Book of Revelation there are heard impatient voices crying out and asking, How long it would be until evil doers would be judged because of their wickedness, and the meek and lowly of heart, the patient of spirit, inherit the promised blessings.

It is in this way that the third series of generations in Genesis, by prevision, casts the thoughts forward to the end of generations and the consummation of all the generations in the Word of God. There is a paradox in the thought that the further off men are from the consummation of all things the nearer they seem to be ; and, the nearer they are the more carnal they become and sceptical, and thus the patience is almost exhausted, the hope nearly lost, and the faith less reliable. When He appears in glory will there be any faith left ? Are there any men left upon the earth, like Abraham, who hear the Divine voice and obey the Word of God ? These are vain questions, the ages, and the problems to be worked out are quite different ; it was the mission of Abraham to flash the light of faith by pre-vision forward, and down through the ages. The men of this age say that the light of faith is almost lost ; that the hope of Isaac and Israel is almost dead ; and that the patience of the saints has little power over men. There seem to be no ideals left for men to cherish ; it is questioned if there is any manhood left in men as moral and spiritual ; if a country is worth preserving, if a nation has any significance, and if rulers, laws, righteousness and justice, are worthy of consideration ? Men look around them and wonder what the end will be. There is an ugly poise in the thoughts of men, and the question may well be asked whether the rush is going to be toward complete secularism, selfishness, self-indulgence, and the destruction of the spiritual ; or, if, in the mercy of God, there will be a return to sanity, faith in God, truth and righteousness ? Those who claim to be secularists rejoice in the success of their mission, but there are many strong reasons why they should pause and think ; history contains stern lessons that require to be studied ; thus it is a time for all men to think what the voice of history, as law, and as the Will of God, is saying to men.

The fourth series, not of generations, but of names and spiritual realities, as already suggested, sum up Genesis and its generations ; and the summation is carried forward into a new order. The Spirit has developed that which is spiritual, and thus Abraham,



Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, may be conceived as Faith, Hope, Patience and Love. This is the order of the Spirit ; they are results attained ; they indicate what the work of the Spirit has been, and also the means used for the development of the Kingdom of Grace. Men look on and try to study all these complex operations of the Spirit ; but the machinery is not understood ; thus they cannot say that in it all they are able to discern law as the Will of God. This is a thought not to be forgotten in the study of the Scriptures ; and it is one not easy to understand or to remember. There is a sense in which the development is ever rising higher until it may seem to reach the twelfth stage in the Book of Revelation ; but there is, in another sense, a limitation to the fourth stage of development, and men do not get beyond that stage of empiric thought. For example, although Genesis has the pre-vision of ten generations, they may, in a spiritual sense, be conceived as involutions in the womb of time, and not as spiritual births ; and even this fourth series is a preparation for the beginning of a new series of movements to be conceived as psychic, as providing signs for the visible nation of Israel in its redemption, or birth ; and, in the visible development in nation and kingdom. This, however, is a very complex problem that does not require special study at this stage of inquiry. The line of thought here is that an age closed with the departure of Terah from Ur ; that a new age begins with Abraham, and that this age extends as a pre-vision of truth down through the ages. The promises of God to Abraham will not be fulfilled in Spirit and Truth until through Christ all nations are blessed ; the hope in Isaac, the patience in Jacob, and the love and wisdom in Joseph, must all run upon the same lines ; the developments recorded are not to be conceived as fulfilment ; they are the means by which they are being fulfilled ; by which all that is in the promises, the mysterious involutions in the seed of life, are being manifested or revealed. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph are spiritual roots with far reaching significance ; and they do not change throughout all the ages. God is the God of Faith, Hope, Patience, Love and Wisdom ; and it is from these roots that there is natural and spiritual development. It is true in the form of words that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that usually the name of Joseph is not included ; but it will be remembered that Joseph is specially related to Egypt ; he is a true type of the Beloved Son of the Father ; but this revelation as a world-wide

truth is fulfilled in Christ, the Revealer of the Will of God, and the Saviour of the World. The spiritual visions that survive Genesis and become living powers in the earth are these works of the Spirit, conceived as spiritual truth, and as the real effectual means of Salvation. It may even be conceived that these are as spiritual germs ; faith lies at the root of all, and from faith in the realm of grace they are developed.

“ Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things ? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord. Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.” But where are the parables, men may say, in the Book of Genesis ? And, if they are parables, how are men to understand them ? Is not every earthly story a parable with a heavenly meaning ? Even so, all these things are true ; and what can disciples do but try truly and earnestly to get beyond the parable of the earthly to the heavenly ? This university is not a school for children ; lesson follows lesson in rapid succession, and time after time the hope is cherished that the parables are nearly ended and the course of studies nearly over. It is not so ; these parables have to be studied and re-studied : and, even when it is thought that the parables are understood, the instruction is study the old parables again ; and, out of the old and the new, be preparing for a higher class. Men have need of patience, for this Kingdom of heaven is a marvellous study.

What is the Book of Genesis but a series of parables, stories for little children, pre-historic and traditional parables of the Kingdom of heaven ? They are there to be studied in a reasonable way ; in the way children can read and understand them. They are also great ideals ; and they are real history, but how can children grasp the ideal ; and how can wise critics read the history ? The very complex, pre-historic traditional story of mankind is very like the experience of childhood ; it is a wonderfully complex volume ; when children look for the book they think it is not written ; but they are mistaken ; it is all written in the mysterious volumes of generations of minds and memories ; and also in their own memories, for almost unconsciously the same book has been written over again in their minds during childhood. There may be a valuable lesson hereabout for parents and teachers, as a means of helping them to understand how the

young should be trained. If parents and teachers are unable to read and understand the parables of the generations, how much less could the children do so? Yet how valuable the stories, how full of interest the parables, and how precious the lessons that are to be derived from this book of childhood. There are dark days, stormy times and much wickedness, and the stern, terrible lessons of justice and judgment are not forgotten. But the home of the children, where they love to play, is upon the breezy uplands of Palestine, in the homely tent, with the wandering flocks in the green pastures near the wells of water. It is so wonderful, so true, so beautiful, to listen and wait for the Voice of God, to meet the angels on their messages of mercy and love, to see them going up and down from earth to heaven, and heaven to earth upon a ladder of light. To find a man wrestling with an angel, and the angel wrestling to be worsted in the struggle. To read the story of love and Rachel, the new born baby, the cry Ben-oni and the death of the mother. And the story of the brethren and Joseph, the loved of the father, the wonderful dreams, the hatred of the brethren, the dry pit and the poor lad therein. the feasting, the hard bargain, slavery; the prison and the palace. Are not these, and many other parables of life, written in the hearts of the children; and are they not true as fact and parable to every child that reads the book and its story? But parents and teachers ought to see further than the children, although they ought not to puzzle the children with their problems. It is not the intellectual difficulties that require special study, but rather, in what way the children might be trained to discern the spiritual, in this spiritual book that is ready to flash out in radiant glory from the earthly parable. The ideals are the man, the call, the land, the nation, the promises, and the universal blessed kingdom. As parable, how important for every child is the ideal of manhood; the possession of life to be attained; the nation and its order to be understood and realised; the Kingdom that will never end, and the King that will rule for ever. This is the way of life, and the results the revealed Will of God. The children should absorb the life of faith upon the mother's lap and in the father's arms; they are to see all that Abraham saw by faith; inspire all that Isaac was as hope; learn all that Jacob had to learn in the school of patience; and thus be prepared to go out into the great world animated by wonderful dreams from heaven; strong to do the right; wise to interpret the

Will of God ; and prepared for the duties of life. Thus it must be ; Divine science is now asking the meaning of the book, its summation, and its glory ? The reply is Faith, Hope, Patience, and the wise Love that is Divine, and when the children find these treasures in the book, translate them into the psychic book of their own souls, and go out into the great world guided by the Divine Spirit, this is true education in parable, and in spirit. " Do ye now understand ? " No, not quite clearly, for even now men are but children ; and it is so difficult to separate the ideal from the real ; it is science, law, that reveals the ideal, the Will of God ; but, immediately, the vision of the ideal is taken up again into heaven, and the real, the earthly, the parable, must be re-studied. What men ought to have reached was the promised land of Faith, Hope, Patience and Love ; they missed the way through strife, jealousy, and hatred, and the end was Egypt and bondage, bricks without straw, the murder of the innocent children, subjection, labour, slavery, sin and death. This is where the new book opens ; this is where a new kind of book is written ; this is where the old parables of tradition are gathered up and placed in a new order ; in fact this is where the children of God begin to awaken to the fact that the natural overshadows the spiritual ; and if the spiritual is to prosper, develop, and grow apace, then it must appropriate the earthly, and use visible symbols for higher ends. It is not enough to know the stories of tradition, the parables of life, and the slavery of Egypt ; these are all means towards an end. The plan and purpose of life in the realm of Grace holds within it the secret of how the Egyptians may be spoiled ; and in what way the wisdom of God will be shown to be greater than that of Egypt. The children require to be trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians ; they must enter the temples of mystery and solve the great intellectual problems by which men become powerful ; and in the days of Moses the Egyptians were both wise and powerful, even though their moral and religious conceptions were idolatrous. It was the child Moses, drawn from the Nile waters, that was the chosen man for this new age. It was from his mother's lips that this child drank the living water, that had in its crystal founts the pictures of the man, the land, the nation, and the universal Kingdom ; these were in him as living water, and the pictures, the parables of childhood, were stereotyped in his soul never to be erased. The problem for this man as student, warrior,

statesman, ruler, was not the glory of Egypt, and the conquest of the world by war ; but how to attain by faith likeness to the man ; how to realise the great type, the land ; how to work, wait, and watch for the day dawn ; and how to be prepared for that great event that must surely come, the great redemption. This is where Moses found himself even in Egypt ; to men he might seem to be intent upon study, or on the service of the state ; but he was following in the footsteps of Abraham in Palestine. talking with Isaac about the great hope, and Mount Moriah ; and asking Jacob questions about the family, the nation, and the kingdom. Moses was a great dreamer if not a great talker ; he thought people should understand his mission ; and, like all other dreamers, he found by experience that the natural must precede in order the spiritual ; and that the ideal is far beyond the reach of the practical man in the great world of Egypt. The past as summed up in all the wisdom of Egypt was a great vision to Moses ; not perfect, far from it, still it is a great book to study in desert places or on the hills of God, because it is there, alone with the Spirit, that there is the quiet translation of visible forms, of parables and stories, into the psychic order that has within it spiritual meaning. This is a true vision ; it is not Genesis alone that is sufficient ; Egypt must be added ; and after Egypt the forty years of the shepherd life with all that it means ; the burning bush unburnt ; the Voice in the fire ; and the signs of power, life, sin, and Divine wisdom.

But will the man then be in a fit state of development for the work he is called to do ? The answer of Moses is that he has not the power to think, wisdom to act, or a tongue that can persuade men as to what is true and right. This is the fruit of his experience in the desert life : the vision is the life in the desert, and out of that life, that mystic psychic soul of man, or of mankind, what can man bring but the desert ? The problem, it will be seen, is psychic, it is not the end but the beginning of the problem of the intellect, not in nature as in Egypt, but in grace in Israel ; and this is a way men had not trod hitherto ; it was the beginning of a new development of the Kingdom of Grace. What was Mesopotamia and its rival world powers ? A great desert. What was Egypt with the fertile Nile ? Only a little oasis in the great desert of the earth ; and, strange to say, this man so trained, with faith in his heart, hope in his life, patience in his labours must go forth and be taught how to reveal, make manifest before

men a peculiar kind of spiritual desert, which men require to pass through, so as to be trained for that land and Kingdom yet to come. Is the problem of development really so very complex as this ? and, consciously or unconsciously, did Moses require all this training to prepare him to be the deliverer of Israel from Egypt, and the lawgiver of Israel ? This must be so, and even at this, as he consciously knew, he was not fit for that work for which he was being prepared. The meaning of these thoughts being that Moses was going to begin another forty years of training, discipline, and of intellectual labour ; it was to be, as men would say, his life work ; in reality it was to translate into intellectual signs and symbols, what as living germs of thought the man had stored up within his own soul. To read the story of the exodus and the desert, as if Moses went forth in his own strength to carry out this great work of redemption, would be short-sighted indeed ; but if the presence of the Spirit is ever remembered, then men may understand Moses, or rather that mighty, wise Spirit in Moses, that taught and guided him in Egypt, and all through that desert journey.

“Moses, my servant, is dead ; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.” These are the words that convey the commission from God to Joshua, for the conquest and possession of the promised land. The desert, internal struggles and conflicts, lust and passion, jealousy and ambition, are at an end, and the vision is the fulfilment of the faithful promises of God. A new age, new forms of thought, and new conditions have come ; the brain of the great thinker is at rest ; the warm heart beats no longer in love for Israel ; the chaos has become a cosmos in order ; the man that performed this great work has fallen asleep ; he is not, God has taken him home ; and there is only the shadow of a grave in Moab, over against Beth-Peor, but Moses is not there ; and no man knows where he is even to this day. Moses was the man who thought the great thoughts, laid out the great intellectual lines of truth and wrote them in his books. To many the books were closed, they were as ancient history, ritual, tradition, poetry, and the vision lay in the future and in the land. It is here that the new order may be instructive as to the value of the past ; it is now law ; it is a treasure in the soul, heart, mind, and in the mouth ; it is the theme of continual meditation ; it is the rule for life,

and it is the means by which there is prosperity and success. This is the ideal of law as the Will of God ; it means manliness, courage, honesty, God-likeness ; the man is now moral, and so duty and obedience are the natural functions of the man's being. The ideal in Joshua is not difficult to discover ; his name and his history reveal his nature ; he is the pre-vision of Jesus, the Saviour, only his work is in the natural realm not in the spiritual ; he goes before the Man who is above all men, to teach them by visible deeds what the true, holy, and faithful Captain of Salvation will be like, or is, in His realm of Grace, Mercy, and Truth. Christian thinkers are so familiar with this line of thought in various forms that it is not necessary to dwell upon the ideal in the man Joshua, the conquest, and the division of the land among the tribes ; but it may be profitable to give a little consideration to visions, which precede, and succeed, the work of Joshua as the type of Jesus the moral Man.

It will be remembered that when referring to the revelation of the "Man of Sin," the thought was suggested that II. Thessalonians falls into Scripture at that point, as bearing specially upon the problem of sin in its manifestations and modes of development. I. Thessalonians comes fifth in that order, and the second letter looks like a shadow of the first ; in fact, it seems to brand sin as the special result of intellectual power and of self-assertion. There are shadows in the Book of Joshua as revealing sin and its consequences as, for example, Achan and his covetousness, and the defeat at Ai, but, as a rule, the ideal of unity, purity, obedience, loyalty, and faithfulness to God and law are sustained throughout the book. It may be asked why this subject of sin is not found in order in the four books of the desert, and the reply might be that the order is to be found in Leviticus, under all the forms and ceremonies contained in that book. Is it not a truth in history that the thoughts of men are occupied upon what they desire to attain ? But, with the attainment, then the interest in what once seemed important dies away ; they enjoy what they possess, and then fall away from their ideals, becoming degraded ; or they are caught in a new wave of forward development. The conception of sin in the desert is that of an inward struggle, or of internal troubles in the community ; there is no clear line of demarcation ; it is a fight in the dark, and what the issue will be man cannot tell. Sin is here, rampant and regnant, the end being death ; it is

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defenceless, and lawless, thus the powers of evil in Moab or Ammon, or in the fierce Philistine, were too strong for Israel, naked, depraved, and immoral. This is the mystery of Grace, and it is also the mystery of evil. Who would suppose that both mysteries were soluble by the great ideal of Law as the Will of God? Yet the truth lies exactly at this point, Law and God were not spiritual concepts in Israel; and because they would not conform to moral law, and worship God spiritually, they had no defence in the day of trouble, and no shield in the day of war. Is it possible that this is the true explanation of all national and personal troubles? Is it within the range of possibility that the real deep-seated trouble among all nations is to be found in this revelation of Divine truth? It is surely time for men to awaken to truth and righteousness, and note the fact that sin is lawlessness; and that there can be no safety, blessing, or prosperity, unless Divine Moral Law is honoured and obeyed, with full recognition of the fact that Law is the Will of God.

The lines of thought that converge here seem to be of practical importance, and thus it may not be out of place to think a little more about this man Joshua, and the message he brings to mankind. It is evident that to Joshua the problems of ritual and ceremony were of little importance; these are forms and symbols, earthly things that tend to idolatry; and thus in a Commonwealth where God is King they are secondary signs, as compared with moral law. It does not follow that such things are to be despised; because in a kingdom of signs and symbols a place will have to be found for them. What is objectionable in such things is, that they do not tend to moral development; in fact, they cannot do so, they are only the beggarly elements of the desert, and if men rise to moral manhood they must leave them behind as unfit for spiritual worship. But the gravest charge that can be brought against such things is this: by their very nature and constitution, they have been the feeders of idolatrous worship, as proved by the heathen nations, and as observed in the nation of Israel. Even in the spiritual age, when gross idolatry of forms was abolished among the Jews, it was temple, priests, ritual, and ceremony that were idol forms, and the Jews were unable to look past their idols and perceive their King. Further, if these things are true, then it is to be feared that similar institutions will work for similar ends, even in Christendom; because it is still the same old problem that remains unsolved, How can the spirit of man rise

to moral manhood, and to the worship of God in the Spirit, when idol forms keep the spirit in thralldom ? The argument here is not that ritualists cannot worship God spiritually ; that is altogether a matter betwixt God and the spirit of the worshippers ; the study here is the order of development ; at what stage ritualism is supposed to be permissible as a means of tuition ; where it may prove a decoy to the down grade toward evil ; and where it ought to be thrown aside as a real hindrance to moral and spiritual development. It is true, and this point is not forgotten, that, in a sense, men are still in the great desert of life, and therefore ritual may be used as a means of grace and help for the weak children in their weary journey. But this is not a suitable argument for the Christian age ; and the very last men to reason in this way ought to be Christian ministers ; because they know, or ought to know, that their work is spiritual : and to keep men, women, and children, in the thralldom of ritualism is to take from them the gracious Spirit of Christ, and to try to put upon them the fetters of mere symbolism.

The development in Joshua appears to be of a different order ; it is truth, law, righteousness, duty, and God that are his standards of thought. Against Amalek, the lord that is lawless, the enemy of God, he fought the good fight of faith ; he was with Moses on the sacred Mount of Law ; he received and studied the Law in the tent ; it was Law that was his study ; he became the great concept of moral law, being made, as in subjective thought, a man in harmony with the objective revelation of moral law. It is the ideal that is to be transfigured out of the visible signs ; and it is what these mean as transfigured ideas that is of the highest importance in this study. It is the moral men in all ages that rise above priests and the knowing men ; and as men well know, it is the moral men that have been trusted to care for the interests of the commonweal. Joshua is the symbol of truth and righteousness, law and justice ; it is his work to subdue, to divide and to rule ; and because he was the embodiment, the ideal, of these great moral powers, he was the honoured prince in the Commonwealth of Israel. It was because Israel failed to find such men within her border that there came decay, degradation, moral perversion, spiritual idolatry and anarchy ; the seed of goodness and of grace was there, but it had fallen into an unfertile soil ; the weeds, brambles, briars, and thorns sprang up everywhere, and thus the pleasant land of promise, as possessed by a corrupt people, became

less prosperous, or even more cursed, than when held by the Canaanites as their possession.

When advancing toward the contemplation of the end of the Commonwealth and the rise of the kingdom in Israel, it is almost necessary to cast the glance backward for a minute, to glance at the story of Ruth, the gentle Moabitess, who became a link in the development of the kingdom of Israel. The old story of the departure of man from God takes a new form ; but the return has in it all the charm and devoted love of a woman's heart. When men draw near to the realm of Divine Grace in their thoughts, it is very remarkable that their studies are women ; and that through women lost blessings are recovered. Because of famine men left their home to seek food elsewhere, and it was found in Moab ; but to men Moab became as sin, death, and a grave ; there is no true life in Moab throughout the ages ; as a rule it is intellectual pride, conceit and arrogance ; and yet the fact must not be questioned, there is in the disciplined, purified, true intellect that which is absolutely necessary for true moral development and growth in grace. The type of this true ideal is summed up in the gentle, devoted, loving Ruth. Somehow through Naomi, the bereaved widow, her soul opened to the faith and hope of Israel ; and the result was that when Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and returned to her own people ; the soul of Ruth clave to the soul of Naomi ; she became an Israelite indeed ; a true worshipper of God, with a heart true and devoted, even to death, to all that she had espoused. Ruth is a beautiful ideal of modest, earnest, devoted truth ; she comes to men clad in robes of purest white, and she is a study for poet and painter. It is from this matrix the King will be derived ; of course it is a long study backward and forward, but Ruth is a link in the story, in that long development of the ages. It is interesting to notice that the story is plainly meant to have a reference to the tribe of Judah, and the kingdom of Israel, because it ends with ten generations from Pharez to David ; and if Jacob and Judah are added backward, these twelve form the nation ; and, if forward then Jesus, as the Christ, is the true Son of David and King of Israel.

It has been suggested that the type changes in the order of development ; thus, after the moral stage is past, the thoughts gather around the kingdom and the king in the natural order and in the spiritual fulfilment. The conception is that man has failed ; he has come short of the requirements of law ; the case

is utterly hopeless; he cannot redeem himself; and what is even worse, he will not even learn how stupid he is, and how hopeless is the task in which he is engaged. This is a truth, it would seem, that men cannot hear or bear in any age; the pride and arrogance of men will not be so limited; the elder brother has the right to reign, and he will not abdicate in favour of any supplanter. So far, therefore, as related to development by man and manhood here the struggle ends in Israel; another line has to be taken, and the advance will be through another ideal. In the past, God has been known as the Almighty, as Jehovah, and even as Lord and King, the Lawgiver, the Conqueror and Judge. In the Commonwealth Jehovah is recognised as Ruler, and Head, the God of Israel, but the conception of King is not common; the men of Israel had not risen to the true conception of a Commonwealth, as men in the likeness of God doing the Will of God in the conscious presence of the Divine Law-giver and Ruler. Is it so that any Commonwealth, republic, or any similar form of government, as known to men, is built up upon this ideal? If not, must it follow that their ideal is faulty and that the result must be failure? Men have to face this thought, that they attempt to set up a government based on moral laws, as they know them; and they hope that such a system of government is going to reign in truth as a kingdom of righteousness. Now, for good reasons, the ideal is not blotted out by God; it is an ideal; it is the moral ideal, and, therefore, it ought to exist; but the point for men to consider is this, seeing that Israel, and many nations, have set up this ideal time after time, and failed, is it not reasonable to conclude, or begin to suspect, that men are ever repeating the same blunder, and attempting to reach an end where there is no end, but only a vicious circle? This would appear to be a matter where God hides quite as much, or even more, than He reveals; men will have it that they are wise and knowing, good and moral, that they know both good and evil; and thus as men, intellectual, moral beings, they are permitted to go on to solve these problems since they are so confident that they are able to do so. Men will not accept counsel from the Most High; they will follow the devices and the desires of their own hearts; and they alone are to blame for their folly. Is it not clear that the necessity for a moral nation is ideal moral law as objective truth and reality; and that in conformity and harmony with the objective, the same law should exist in every man.

This is the ideal in Joshua ; it was here that Israel failed ; it is here that all nations fail ; and what is more serious, the failure must be continuous until this fatal error is remedied.

It is in the visible order in Israel that suggestions are found which may direct the thoughts of men in the right way ; and if they are not too proud to learn, it may be profitable to study Hannah and Samuel, Mary and Jesus, for this end. The conception takes this form ; the Spirit may be thought of as wearied out with trying to teach men who will not learn, and who think they know ; and of trying to get them to act righteously, when they are satisfied with their doings, cannot see their errors, and will not receive and obey Law, as the Will of God. The Spirit begins to move within the soul of the woman ; there is a new Divine conception and the woman conceives in sorrow and brings forth the seed of Grace with pain. It was thus with Hannah ; what men did not feel she felt ; what men could not see she discerned ; and thus her prayer and sorrow, and that strange longing for a man-child, to be received from, and given back to, God. The new line of thought indicated here is that the condition of Israel appeared to the vision of Hannah to be hopeless ; priests and people, judges and those who sought for justice, were all gone astray ; the Church, in modern phrase, was corrupt and degraded, and the State was in a condition of anarchy. There were no wise men left in the Commonwealth ; the head was sick, the heart was faint, the end seemed near, and thus there was no hope for man except in God. Is there not faith and hope in the very thought that seeing Hannah was so influenced, there must have been within her the power of the Spirit to awaken her to such a vision ? It must be observed that this is not a moral struggle within the woman as to good and evil ; it is the cry of the gracious heart for grace, with the gracious intent to give back graciously all that has been received. It is the hungry longing soul desiring what will give glory to God and blessing to men. It is the prayer of the servant to the King to come and save, bless, and reign ; in fact, her heart thirsts for God and His Salvation ; and short of this she cannot find rest and peace. All that was involved in her prayer, and in her cries and sufferings, she did not fully understand ; but this she did know, a man-child was required, and if no man-child was given, the outlook for Israel was desperate. To many women promises had been given that they would bear children, but here is a woman who longs

and prays for a child, and promises to devote that child to God's service. The ordinary conceptions as to child-bearing and suffering are not for a moment considered; for the joy in the prospect all pain and suffering are despised; she will become altar and sacrifice both if only this gracious boon is granted to her. Observe here the result of all this work of the Spirit in the soul of Hannah; the child is conceived, it develops in the womb, it is one with herself; it is in a true sense a divine child, it is God's gift and it is God's child. It is here that the pre-vision of development begins; up to this time it has been faith, experience, empiricism, order and law, but now Grace lives, it is a seed, it grows in the womb, it becomes a man-child, a man, and the servant of God. If Ruth was chosen as the gracious stone to lie at the root of the monarchy; it is Hannah, the gracious, that seeks after and finds the gracious king of Israel.

With regard to Samuel, and the Kingdom a few thoughts may be suggested. Before he came there was no open vision in Israel; in other words, spiritually the people were almost dead; and religiously the lamp glimmered very faintly, just expiring, and the land was shrouded in darkness. The moral commonwealth is a vision of the past, not to be restored. What then was the future for Israel? The conception is that Samuel is a prophet, a seer, a voice, a discerner of thoughts, and a judge; but, surely all these mean that this man speaks the thoughts of God, sees in the light of God, utters the words of God, discerns good and evil in the sight of God, and judges men if they disobey God. When Moses wished for guidance he went where God could be found; but Samuel goes to no place to find God, He is ever with him in his soul. Here is a new type, and an ideal different from Moses or Joshua. Why, this man has the King's eyes, ears, voice, hands and feet; he is the King's representative, to reveal, and do, the will of the King. Is this where the conception of Kingship arises? Not in the moral commonwealth where all men are free and equal, the only difference being that of function and office; but here where one man comes between the King and men, as a mediator, a servant, a teacher and a judge. Is this the conception of a king in a kingdom; and, is it something like this that kings ought to be? "*Dei Gratia*," is a good motto; but does it really mean that kings reign by the Grace of God, for gracious ends; or, how is this matter to be understood? Israel wearied of the ideal; they rejected their King and chose

Saul. Was Saul a king after the ideal ; or was he an earthly king ? He was a king like other kings upon the earth ; he was not in the likeness of the King ; thus as matter of fact he misrepresented the King. It cannot be conceived that the King resigned the office of Kingship, this could not be ; what men learn is that the one chosen by God was rejected by the people, that they chose a different stamp of man ; and, that Saul was faithless, disobedient, jealous, petulant, in fact, an evil doer, and that his end was death on the battlefield. Now this king does not count in the spiritual realm ; he is a false ideal ; an idol if men will, but not in the likeness of the King of Israel. The likeness is in the uncrowned king, the true man with clean hands and a gracious self-sacrificing spirit. The next king, David, is one chosen by God from among his brethren ; but he was not the true, righteous, faithful King. It is necessary to discern what David means ; he is a complex study ; not an ideal, and not meant to be ; but rather he is to the Kingdom of Israel what ritual and ceremony is for the desert and Mosaism. The spiritual being rejected in Samuel, the seventh, what was required for that age was the manifestation of a visible kingdom, king, and order of things. Israel was permitted to study this new movement, and the people even brought themselves to think, that, the rejected of God, the temporal and the visible, was the very king that they ought to expect. It is here, as in all preceding ages, the people are found deceiving themselves ; they will have it that their disobedience is of no importance ; the judgments and the warnings of God fall upon deaf ears ; they are told that they are walking as in a vain show, but they are convinced that all is well and that there is no mistake about their privileges and their position. It is so in this story of the Kingdom of David ; it is signs and symbols, images and shadows, not the real Kingdom at all, only a training school, a place for drill and show. But men may say is not this assertion too sweeping ? Think upon the goodly armies and many victories ; the extension of the Kingdom and the subduing of enemies ; the glorious temple of Solomon, and the ritual and services of the priests. Even so they are before men at this day ; and, in the light of law, as the Will of God, they are just as solid as shadows ; and they will all perish from off the face of the earth. But to estimate Israel and its Kingdom in such a fashion is also to lightly esteem, and condemn, modern nations, somewhat like Israel in its visible organisations,

designs and purposes ; it is to call that pinchbeck which men declare is pure gold ; it is to declare that these modern noble empires are not true and righteous, and that they will not stand for ever. Surely there can be no difficulty in seeing all that this means ; the day of true judgment has come upon men ; they cannot accept the " *Dei Gratia* " of kings or emperors ; they waive aside as silly tales the arrogant assumptions of priests ; and they say, Behold, it is the Law that judges all men, things, and systems ; prove conformity with, and obedience to law, as Divine Standard, and then men will know that what is claimed is the Will of God. But is there nothing that survives the Kingdom of Israel ? Has all been swept away even as the visible realm of David and Solomon has disappeared like a vision of the night ? Just what men might have thought would have survived has perished ; but what was not prized still lives. In other words, the gold and glitter of the visible are all gone ; but the spiritual, the sorrow in the psalms, suffering in the persecutions, the trials of faith, the thought of victory over spiritual foes, and the glory of Christ, these remain, and they are still alive. It is Samuel that represents Christ as Man, and as the rejected of men ; but it may also be true that, in a sense, David partakes of, and reflects, the sufferings of Christ and the following glory. Here it is not necessary to follow in spirit the downfall of such a Kingdom as Israel ; or to consider the means by which it hastened to its end ; the truth revealed in the rejection of Samuel, and in the whole system of the State is quite sufficient to prove that such a Kingdom could not continue to live. The poisonous fangs of the serpent sin lay at its roots ; thus, what appeared to be vital and strong was really doomed ; and, all that it could do was to carry some of the spiritual thoughts of God through that age, so that they might become living germ seeds in that Kingdom of Messiah, of David's Son, expected by men.

Following up this conception of development in type and ideal, it is not necessary to linger over the period of the Restoration and the Prophets. These speak as with the voice of judgment and justice upon the past ; the period of the natural, the visible, the symbolic is gone, and the age of the spiritual is pressing forward to occupy the future. What men might have observed was that the past was judged and condemned ; and what men ought to realise is, that in the light of law, as the Will of God, that was the order of development ; and that the way of



salvation, redemption and restoration to God was revealed along that narrow track as contained in the Bible. It is not suggested that these revelations are valueless, but the very reverse ; they are useful even if compared to empty waterpots ; because Christ came to fill and fulfil them with the new wine of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is this fulfilment of the past that is the theme of the Gospels ; but the vision is not purely spiritual ; it is still encompassed with the earthly ; it is full of signs, symbols and parables, and thus it would be with the greatest difficulty that a careless student would be able to discover the links of connection betwixt the Old and the New Testaments. In visible things there is little or no resemblance ; the linking with the past is not by high priest, ritual, or temple ; by the Jewish State, or by the Synagogues ; it is by the few faithful spiritual souls that survive, who are found to catch up the quivering rays of truth in anxious hearts, and are bringing together the dying embers of spiritual life that lie upon the hearth of Judaism. Attention has been drawn to Ruth and Hannah as typical women of their age, and as ideals in the Kingdom of Grace ; it is now to be suggested that one ideal in the New Testament is also a woman, and the type she represents is worthy of careful study. The ideal in Hannah is one that fits in with the spirit of the Kingdom of Grace ; it is the spirit of devotion to the cause of God and of self-sacrificing love ; but it is conceivable that a still higher ideal exists, certainly a different one, and may be traced in Mary the Mother of Jesus ; and, of necessity, also in her Son. It does seem strange that women should thus be considered as types of what is specially Christian ; and that they are so highly privileged in the Kingdom of Grace. What is meant here leads the thoughts in this direction ; taking the Kingdom of Grace as a whole, where will men find the highest type of what a Christian ought to be ? The reasons why Mary is chosen as an ideal are as follows : at the Annunciation she received the Divine message in that spirit of modest resignation to the Will of God which may be said to be perfect meekness ; she is the Lord's hand-maid, and what His pleasure is, that is hers also ; there is no false shame, or hesitation, no calculation as to evil results ; what the Lord's will is that is right, and to be obeyed. But it is what arises out of this announcement and submission to the Will of God that is so very remarkable when considered in the light of the law of development. Within this maiden's womb

there was conceived and developed the Holy Child, the Son of God ; it was of this most marvellous Child that she was the mother ; He was entrusted to her to nurse and tend, and to watch over ; it was her study and delight to conceive His thoughts ; and the keenest pangs she ever endured was on the Mount of Calvary. The line of thought it will be observed, is that of history ; it is summed up in herself in the first instance even as in physical form in the womb, and during life ; but, in reality, this was only one side of the problem, because in her spirit and soul she was being developed into the spiritual likeness of her Son, the Lord from Heaven. The Archtype, the Ideal, is above all ideals and types ; thus whilst it is true that every eye is turned to Him and not to the virgin mother, it is never with the thought that He can be measured or understood ; but with Mary it seems different : the same meek gentle spirit is possible ; the same resignation to the Will of God is right ; the conception of the spiritual ideal of Christ is a New Testament thought ; for it is said that Christ dwells in the heart by faith ; that there is growth into His likeness ; and, in fact, the biological revelation in the story of Mary becomes the Spiritual and the Eternal in the Epistles. It does not seem necessary to follow this study of type and ideal in the Bible further ; all that was in Mary as seed and babe is spiritually transferred to every believing, trustful, obedient, faithful soul ; the mystery of the incarnation by the Spirit has entered humanity ; and, if Christians throughout the ages had understood the words they uttered from the Divine Word, they would not have comprehended the mystery, but they would have believed the truth. It is no use for men to say that this is only spiritualising a physical or natural truth ; the thought has to be considered, pondered upon, that the stage of the natural is past ; men have got past ever-changing forms ; thus it is said, this is spiritual truth, it is law, and law is the Will of God as spiritually conceived and understood by men.

The remarks that have been made upon ideals, and types, appear to be of sufficient importance to warrant a little further inquiry into this interesting subject. There is the feeling as if a great panorama had passed before the vision ; that light and day had been followed by darkness and night ; and yet the onward progress had in it increasing light, and also less gruesome darkness. The Spirit has been moving in the midst, and there is a hope that the light and the day are near, and that, with this

new day the sun will not set and the darkness will not return. To catch the idea that gives light and glory to a type, it may be profitable to try to concentrate the light upon those types of men that are mentioned in Scripture before the days of Abraham. If the form is Adam as created on the sixth day of creation, or Adam as made from the dust of the earth, is there not vagueness and want of definite form? Further, take Seth the man appointed in the place of Abel; or Enoch, the shadow walking with God, and the Voice in the ages; or, even Noah, the Ark and the Flood, are they not difficult to focus into personal form as living types? They are forms, shadows, or voices in the night of pre-historic times. They speak of the chaos, of change and movement, of light and dark, day and night; it is involution rather than development; or rather the development is as in the dark womb and men cannot discern what the visions mean. It is different with Abraham: here is an ideal man, a type to study; and yet, somehow, he has developed out of that dark past; and he responds to, and corresponds with, that first man Adam of the creation series. This conception of a period from type to type will be worthy of study; it opens a new avenue in the vision heavenward; and, as each type comes into view there is an added grace and glory to the new type; it is like, and it is the same, as the past, but there has been an addition, and the important matter is to find out what this addition means in the order of development. It is not the pre-historic age that gives to men in sharp outline, the successive types; it is from Abraham to David and Solomon in Israel, and this is, as matter of fact, the period of outward visible symbol; of men, law, religion, a land, nation and kingdom. If these thoughts are kept in view the remarks on each type may be very brief; it will be sufficient to point out how these types are related, and the addition in each stage of development.

- (1) The type in Abraham is that of Faith, of spiritual life in the man; he sums up all the past; he is a new creation in Grace. God lives in man, he lives in God; he hears the Voice of God, meets with His angel servants, obeys the Divine Call, believes in, and receives, the promises of God in all their fulness for all ages. There cannot be any question as to the problem involved in the life of Abraham, it is the salvation of mankind by sacrifice, and the blessings of the Divine revelation will be for all nations.
- (2) The type in Isaac embraces all that is in the promises given

to Abraham ; but there is, in a sense, limitation ; this is the son, the promised heir of the inheritance ; in hope he has the land in possession. The living Isaac is the epitome of Abraham, but the ideal is converged in a man, and that man is the promised seed, the son and sacrifice for sin. (3) The type in Jacob is unlike Abraham and Isaac ; yet he is the heir of all that they represent. He is a very complex study as supplanter, and as Israel ; as son at home, and as help in the home of Laban ; as a lonely wanderer at Bethel, and as father of the numerous family, the nucleus of the nation. The man, the land and the nation, in embryo, are all in Jacob, as Israel ; the manifold lines of the future are in vision laid down, and thus men see seed changed into root, stem and branches ; or to put the matter in another form, God has revealed Himself in Grace ; the Son is the Ideal of hope, land, and salvation ; and the Spirit has added the lines of plan, purpose, design, and order ; these are new ideals and types. (4) The type in Joseph is different ; it is the earthly Egypt ; in his history is found the beloved son, the father, the home, the flocks, the brethren, bondage, the prison, the dreams, the interpretation and supreme rule. Is not all this contrast rather than likeness to the ideal in Jacob ; and yet in Jacob is there not the father, and home, the brother that would kill, the dark night, and the vision at Bethel ; the service, and after that freedom and prosperity. Is not this the very wonder and the mystery of revelation, that the like should be followed by the unlike ; the macrocosm by the microcosm, with no visible likeness ; the ideal in plan and design by the visible, the tangible and what is related and conditioned ? It is a great extension of vision from Israel with his family, flocks and herds in the days of famine in Palestine, to that revelation of Joseph as servant and ruler, the saviour of the world. These are one series of visions of types and ideals ; they are in the germs in Genesis ; they are world-wide and also personal, they become national and world-wide, so that men may study and try to understand them as great psychic and empiric truths. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph sum up Genesis ; thus all that there is in psychic thought in the visible realm of Grace is summed up in these four different types, as the result of the work of the Spirit. These four faces take the symbolic form of the Spirit, as Faith, Hope, Patience, and Love ; or as the face of the man, the lion, the ox, and the eagle, as the four living creatures. (5) The type in Moses is that of the begin-

ning of a new series. The seed of faith is conceived as in the womb of the great world of Egypt; it is surrounded by the physical and the natural; and the vision is that of being doomed to this condition and to death, unless there come a special intervention of God to redeem what is of the earth, and is a spiritual chaos without light or hope. The type of the new development is the intellect of man; it is Moses as separated from the merely psychic; the power able to relate and condition thoughts, place them in their order, forms, signs and symbols; in fact, that power from God which inspires the breath of freedom, breaks the bonds of earthly conditions, aspires to be free, reasons how freedom can be attained, glorifies God by victory, hungers and thirsts for knowledge and for order, and enters into the fierce conflict of life against the world, the flesh and the devil. Whether this type is applied to reason in the great world of thought as applicable to history, or to the individual, the type is the same; it is this power that is typified in mythology as by Zeus and Thor; but in the noblest and truest form in Moses. If men follow Zeus, Thor, and similar gods, they get lost in the mazes of the myths that surround them; but if they follow the vision in Moses, the way is redemption, freedom, liberty, and the entrance upon the way to the land of promise, even if it is by the Desert. The man is the type; the way is the right way; it is an ideal, and those who have considered this problem of intellectual supremacy and service will see how all this fits into the facts in history. The supremacy is found in Moses, or in the intellect; it does not evolve itself out of the chaos; it is lord and master to begin with, and the chief servant in the House of God. 6. This type in Joshua is very different from the ideal in Moses; and yet they are most intimately connected. There is an aspect of the development from Moses to Joshua that would tend to favour ethical ideals; for it would almost appear as if Joshua arose from, and was the successor of, Moses. This is not so; he is a new type even although it is to be taken for granted that he is the lineal successor of all the foregoing types. The Desert history in field and tent, on hill-top and in council chamber, tend to develop a new type, in this sense that order, intellect, and reason converge into the light of Moral Law; and life to such a type is conformity to law, the subjection of what is contrary to law; and the placing of life in all its divisions under the realm of order and law. The intellect by Moses

comes forth on the great Message of Divine mercy to redeem men from worldly power and to bestow upon them freedom and liberty—thus the important thought that only the free can be moral. The moral order by Joshua comes with the pure of heart to see the face and Will of God, and with a true, brave heart prepared to do God's Will. The history of Israel from Joshua's death to Samuel's birth is that of moral degradation, and visibly the type in Joshua is apparently lost; there are none righteous; there are no men able to direct their own steps; the moral fall is disastrous, and with the nation it is a condition of anarchy. The type in the natural, Adam, had a similar fall; it was the same in the days of Noah; the story was repeated in the days of Terah in Chaldea, and with Israel in Egypt. It is therefore plain that if types follow each other in succession up to moral manhood, and man as moral is left free to obey moral law as the order of his being, there comes a stage where the natural not merely fails, it must give place to the spiritual, or men must become so degraded as to lose the moral features of manhood. 7. The type in Samuel is not natural but spiritual: it is the third in order from Moses, thus of the spirit: and the seventh from Abraham, thus he is the peacemaker to reconcile God and man, the prophet of the kingdom of Grace, the ruler over the people of God, the just judge and the spiritual discernor of the thoughts of men. 8. The type in David is of necessity that of an earthly persecuted man; that is the ideal; but there follows the kingdom and the throne and the possession of the promises of God in man, land, and nation. 9. Solomon as a type carries the thoughts forward to David's Son and Lord, and to that kingdom which shall never end.

It is assumed that the type forms thus referred to, as specially available for observation in the nation of Israel, are so because they bring out so clearly in the men an ideal for an age, and what men ought to try to become in the way of development because of the example that has lived in their midst. The new type as a result of the past is not a natural production; it is not as if the type came at the end of an age by development as the natural growth. The conception is the reverse of this; it is that a type appears, but men do not see or understand it; they do not improve to the type, but become retrograde and in action degraded; thus looking upon men from the natural stand-point, the judgment would be that they do not rise to the type they

possess ; and they are never prepared for the new type and age. This seems to be another series of examples of the election of Grace as explained by Paul ; the nation falls short ; but, through the remnant, by faith, by the guidance of the Spirit, by the Will of God, there is the sudden revelation of a new type with Divine power, and there follows a struggle betwixt the old and new types of thought. This is another method of reaching the former conception as to degraded nations ; they conform to past types ; they will not advance to a new type ; thus they are left behind in the development of the race ; they become natural not spiritual, and thus they are not moved by the Spirit. It is not necessary to go back beyond the Flood to find illustrations of this truth ; this is the meaning of the Jews and Mosaism ; and, what is much more serious, this is the sad condition of Christianity and of Christians. The type is well known ; the ideal is found in the Gospels and Epistles ; and Christendom, instead of being Christian and like Christ, is a strange mixture of Jewish Mosaism, Greek wisdom, and Roman law. It is one of the most amazing facts worthy of the most careful study, that this weakness of men and perversion of what is true and right, is the ever recurring method of blundering and sinning of which learned, wise, conservative thinkers have been found guilty ; they have seemed to prefer to lose sight of the type ; they have set up traditions and the thoughts of wise men ; and they have not the shadow of a doubt about their being right, and that other people are wrong. There is a new type of thought being set up in science in the midst of men ; will they be able to see its truth and beauty as the Divine ideal ? As to the past there is no difficulty ; they lost the ideal, the type of the past age ; they have been wandering among tombs and graveyards of the dead ; and thus the Light of the World and the Lord of Life has been as a stranger to them. The Lord by the Spirit has come to men by a new way ; the angel of science has lightened His pathway ; men have used their faith as crutches not as eyes ; faith has been blind, hoodwinked by the traditions of the past and thus the type of the past age and the ideal of the future were not found to agree. It is a strange vision to study, and perhaps men are still too near to it to understand what it means.

The lines of thought here seem to require careful consideration ; and it may well be that this is only touching the fringe of a very large question. These men in the family and nation of

Israel have been taken as types in the visible order, as pre-figuring spiritual truths of ages to come ; they represent great ideals, age long revelations of truth ; and it must not be forgotten that all this is done even under the shadow of the darkening night, and in the intense struggle betwixt good and evil in the world. This revelation of the realm of Grace, it may be supposed, would take this particular form, because, it may be conceived, that every step forward made by God, by a new type, is just another opportunity for the powers of evil to attempt to thwart and destroy what is good and gracious ; thus the apparent repeated failures of God's Kingdom of Grace, and the successes of the power of evil. It is now seen that success, beneath the plane of the spiritual in Christ by faith, is not to be expected ; and the reason why the Christian age is not Christlike and victorious, is because it has not developed to be like Christ. This is the conception men have to set before themselves ; the type is not to be found in their ideals, but in Christ ; in science and law as the Will of God. It is law that must dominate the future in all realms, natural and spiritual ; and, it may be that the conception of types will have an influence on the thoughts of men. To illustrate this matter another series of types will be here suggested, and it may be that they will prove helpful in this study. 1. The types in the history of creation. It is not necessary to point out how valuable these must be when rightly understood ; or to indicate how interesting this study has been in the past through the revelations of the biological sciences. The language of the development of physical life is that of successive types ; and it is by types that there is order and classification. The same term may also be used in the inorganic realm in varied branches of science ; and, it may be assumed that whether the word type is the right one to use or not it is one that scientific men use to point out that there are differences in order, and that these require to be considered. As all ideas and thoughts are taken from physical representations, it will follow that the psychic realm will require to use the same terms ; type is the intellectual concept to express differences in order of a definite kind ; in the moral world it takes the moral form of thought as to truth, righteousness and duty. 2. The types in the ten generations in Genesis, as the order of development in the realm of Grace as natural and spiritual is a very wide study ; only it should be remembered that Heaven and Earth to Terah, are the natural,



the moral; and that to Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, there requires to be added, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. 3. The types in the series of generations; Heaven and Earth to Terah; Noah to Isaac; Shem to Jacob; may also prove a useful study as the order of the Spirit's operations in complex forms in Genesis. 4. The types Abraham to Joseph in Genesis as a psychic study of the empiric realm of Grace should give good results. 5. The types in Moses, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy are almost boundless; this may be said to be the realm of typology in the Kingdom of Grace; and it may be that it is because men bring themselves to believe that they are studying spiritual truths and not types, that they tend to become idolaters of symbol and of word; they are patterns of things in the spiritual mount of God, and to be treated as such at all times. 6. The type in Joshua is the moral man and his possession; the man pure in heart and fervent in spirit serving the Lord. But the type gets shattered in pieces, and the Judges is the sad record of man's fall from type, and the terrible consequences of sin and idolatry. 7. The type of the spiritual in the realm of grace is Samuel as representing the nation and the Kingdom; but here again, because the order is visible, and only the shadow of the great truth, sin finds a place wherein to work to frustrate the grace of God. 8. In David the shepherd, the man persecuted by Saul, there is a type of suffering sorrow and sacrifice; but, the persecuted for the sake of righteousness receive their reward for theirs is the Kingdom. 9. Samuel, David and Solomon carry the thoughts forward to the new age in Christ, because He is the One whom God gives to men and whom God hears; He is the Beloved Son, the King of Israel; and, He is the Peaceable King of Glory of whose Kingdom there shall never be an end.

To sum up these thoughts upon types and ideals, it may not be out of place, very briefly, to put to them the questions in the method of Christ. Whence? Types are revelations to men of the thoughts and the works of the Spirit, as spiritually understood; they are conceived as standards of law revealed, and thus they are the thoughts of God. When? Types are time forms; but they are of the Archtype Christ; they reveal Him as the Ideal. Why? Types are given to men so that they may think upon, study, and try to understand the Divine plan, purpose and design, in the realms of nature and grace. What? Types are earthly forms, symbols, signs, ideas, and concepts, which,

being transfigured by the Spirit, radiate from them the spiritual glory of Christ. How? Types are not solitary figures in history, they exist in scientific natural order; at first they are simple in their order but they advance in complexity; they increase in their forms of specialisation; thus each succeeding type, as from Abraham to Samuel is a continuous and ever increasing biological study of increased organisation of a very complex kind. The new type possesses, in embryo, all the types of the past, just as the embryo of the man is conceived to inherit the ideal forms of past ages. If this had not been one of the great visions of science, thinkers would never have dreamt of using it in this way; they would have continued to think of man, as individual, and as isolated; but now they link man with all the past and with all creatures; they do more, for men carry all creatures as in themselves, to the Divine footstool of Grace; and, they are emboldened to say that God is All in all. Who? Types have a strange language and they speak to men in strange ways. Thus for example a man is a branch of the True Vine, and the life in his soul is Christ's life; man is a stone in a temple, but he is a living stone and he is the image of the Foundation Stone; he is a temple and in him God dwells spiritually; it is even said that in God man lives, moves and has his being. Whilst man knows that he is man, conscious, spiritual and responsible; he also believes that, in a true, and real, sense, Christ dwells in him and he dwells in Christ. Both truths, in all their fulness, are true; but this mystic vision is not for a little child or for a wrangler about words and signs, it is something to be believed, to be realised as true, and to be pondered upon in the secret places of the soul. Whereunto? All these things tend to reconciliation with God, regeneration in the Spirit, consecration in the soul, and final restoration to the favour of God. The Archtype is Christ; thus the Foundation is Christ and the whole Temple is Christ. Men, turn away from what is of man and the vision is the New Man, Christ; He is All in all, as Saviour, High Priest, King and Lord. Whither? The vision surpasses the seen and temporal, sorrow and suffering, self-denial and self-sacrifice; the end is life, the resurrection glory and the eternal life in the light of law as the Will of God.

There is another aspect in which this matter appears, and it will be suitable to introduce it at this point. The assumption has been that in this summation there is seen to be harmony

found in the three books of Nature, Man and the Bible; and that these agree in their testimony as to the truths that have been under consideration. Now it has to be suggested that these three books have in reality produced a fourth book; and this fourth book will not be the least interesting in the series. What is meant is this: each of these books is an independent work, or volume; each book contains its own story; they exist separately, yet they are supplementary; and, it is only by the study of all three that they are understood individually and collectively; and, it is from the unity and harmony in the three that the fourth is seen to be required to be a separate volume. It ought not to be difficult to understand this enigma, because it can be seen at a glance that the scientific results of all these harmonies is that these books are all transfigured; this new volume, developed out of earthly forms, is also a transfigured creation and all four books are in agreement. The great book of Nature may be compared to the Book that reveals God; the book in man as manifesting the Man, Christ; the book of the Bible as the special revelation of the Spirit; and, this fourth book is all that is in the Spirit as made manifest in a new creation, making manifest the plans, purposes and designs of the Spirit in creation and re-creation. This ideal lies at the roots of the creation story; it is repeated in many forms throughout the Bible; it is the philosophic ideal in development; and thus it is worthy of consideration. It is hardly necessary to point out that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph embody the same root ideas; they are found again in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; and they are repeated in a higher spiritual form in the four gospels. In modern scientific language there is revealed here a new type; the earthly has become radiant and is responding to the heavenly; it is the spiritual spectrum at last; the absorbent dark earth has become radiant in light; the convergence of the rays of truth are revealed, and the earth has become conscious of all the glory that has been poured into it by the Divine Spirit of Truth.

Here it is well to remember that these four books are two pairs of twin volumes; and that of necessity this must be so. Books one and two, Nature and Man, represent the universal and the ideal, God and Christ; they are in themselves inexplicable, because apart from the Spirit and Nature, transfigured and spiritual, these could not be understood. Books three and four

are the Spirit and the spiritual creation, and it is by the Spirit that God and Christ are revealed ; and that the spiritual in man is led to perceive this derivation, separation, continuation, and development. Just as these books are thus set in pairs, so the same conception is found in Abraham and Isaac on the one side, and Jacob and Joseph on the other ; the one set is heavenly, of faith with an ideal man and place ; the other is the mystery of the spirit in Jacob in all his waywardness and wandering, and the divine son in Egypt. With Exodus and Leviticus the story is the same, a great revelation and redemption with the consecrated ideal ; and the desert wanderings with the glorious song of Moses. The Gospels Matthew and Mark follow in the same order ; Jesus the Son of Abraham the Vision of Faith, and the Man the Son of God ; and the Gospel of the Spirit to all men and nations, with the Gospel of John that actually manifests God, as Divine Love in Jesus Christ the Saviour.

With the generations of Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, as seen in the Book of Genesis, it is not possible to get an outline of what they represent. But when these are thrown forward in history and are seen to represent the lineal descendants of Abraham, by the Spiritual Vision, then they are full of interest. Here again are four volumes of a developed order, and they are linked together in the same mysterious manner. Moses and the desert represent Ishmael ; Joshua, and Judges, the moral realm or the generations of Isaac ; and Samuel, David, Solomon and the nation in its history, the grace, suffering and glory realms of thought, as those of Esau and Jacob. There is, as matter of course, an extension in vision of the later generations ; and the prophets and New Testament are all included in the generations of Jacob. It can now be understood why the New Testament contains so much about types, signs, and symbols in the past, as indicating in what way these have been fulfilled in Christ ; the consummation of that age had come ; Christ was glorified, and these four volumes of truth were found in radiant spiritual harmony. The Christian age begins with Christ, as the Christ type, and the Archtype of all types ; and the Spiritual has had to pass through a similar order of development during the past 2,000 years. In other words, all types in the old Testament meet in Christ and are fulfilled by Him ; therefore it must follow that during the Christian age there is only one Type and Example for men, and He radiates forth in His Person the glory

that is in all types. The limitation of study here is the Bible, Nature, and Man ; but it is safe to predict that in the history of the Christian age, there will be found four more volumes, written by the Spirit of God ; that these will be full of spiritual instruction ; and that although different, as to their contents, they also will follow the order of the Spirit. But this is not prediction ; it is sitting in the light of the glory revealed, and asserting that the books are there, because the Spirit has fulfilled the plan, purpose, and design of the age ; and these four volumes are involved in this most glorious work of the Spirit.

Such thoughts as these ought to stir up the careless to consider, and the sceptical to ponder upon, the wonderful works of God in creation ; the marvellous wisdom involved in a human being ; the transcendent glory of the Bible as a spiritual revelation ; and this revelation of the Spirit, in this new Volume of Truth, in the light of science ; that is of law, as the Will of God. It is surely plain that there is no man who has cause for glorying in these revelations and developments ; no matter what the scientific discoveries, or how glorious, behind every discoverer was the Spirit of Truth ; it pleased the Spirit to use them for this end ; therefore the glorying ought not to be of personal wisdom or power, but in the Spirit who was pleased to inspire the desire to know truth, and the power to see and know what is true. Brethren in the field of science have an honourable name for their loyalty to truth ; thus it may be fairly expected that when this great truth dawns upon them, they will, without hesitation, ascribe the glory of all their work to the Spirit of Truth. But another step will require to be taken before these matters are placed upon a solid foundation ; it will be necessary to recognise the fact that the end of science, with all its relations, is order ; and law is not chance in nature, accident or wisdom of man, but the Will of God. It is at this stage of thought that men find themselves ; the cosmos in its order, upon its main lines, lies before them, and surely it can now be seen that to ignore, or reject, law, as the Will of God, is utter folly. It has pleased God to take these four books and open them in the presence of men ; explanation has been given as to their order ; they are independent volumes, and yet they all agree in their order of development ; they are amply proved to be the Divine Wisdom of the Spirit ; in fact, the proof is such a demonstration of fore-knowledge, prevision of secret plan, purpose, design and fulfilment,

that men, it would appear, if they know all the facts, have no choice ; the confession must be that God has spoken ; let every mouth that would deny be shut ; and let the Name of God be glorified.

It is not to be assumed that although these fundamental truths may be considered as proved, that the way is clear for the reception, conception, and full realisation of law, as the Will of God. To translate all this into knowledge, life, duty, self-sacrifice and love, is no light matter ; it will not be easily undertaken ; and the achievement will be the miracle of the ages. The solution of these problems ought not to be considered as impossible, or even difficult. It is a question of spiritual arithmetic ; if God so loved the fallen and sinful as to give His Son for their salvation, then surely they will be saved ; and if the Holy Spirit has in the teeth of all opposition, overthrown the powers of evil, made manifest that the wisdom of the serpent and the world is folly ; and amid darkness and ignorance carried out such a work of grace in the past, will He not also bring this work to a glorious consummation to the praise and glory of God. It may fairly be assumed that, in the light of science, men have attained to a true conception of what is meant by scientific order ; they know that law is the order discovered in nature ; they must conceive it to be a standard of truth before which men must bow their heads ; and they have discovered that in the physical world, if they would make progress, it must be in the knowledge of, in obedience to, and in harmony with, physical laws. Further, it is now generally recognised that physical health means living in harmony with the physical laws of the organic life in the body ; the exclusion from the body of what would tend to disease ; and the neutralisation or sterilisation of any form of malignant life that would subdue and destroy healthy life. In fact, the supreme truth of the physical world, so far as the individual man is concerned is, How can the man live in complete harmony with perfect physical laws, so as to attain and maintain health and vigour ? And after that, How can man set in order, understand, subdue, and control all that is physical ? To this end men study the physical sciences ; and here also the great question may be put in this form, What profit will a man gain even though he has a knowledge of, and possesses power by, all the physical laws, if his own body is unhealthy, and it is a lost thing only fit to be cast away in the

earth? What would not any frail, sickly man give for a healthy body full of joyous vitality? In these two realms of the inorganic and the organic there is now no doubt about these matters; it is true that law reigns, and where law reigns there is vigour and health; but if the lawless, the lower, that which ought to be kept under, is permitted to gain the ascendancy, then the results that follow are disease, death, and that dissolution which ends in the return to the earth, and the disorganised; in fact to chaos and darkness. Even here, when man surveys the physical world, he is unable to bring himself to agree with this reversal of order, this tendency to degradation, disease, and death; true development is in some way checked, and the judgment is that "An enemy hath done this." It is not assumed that these two powers in nature are indissolubly united together; the inorganic can exist apart from the organic, but when the organic is made manifest, then life reigns over that which is dead and uses what is dead, and weaves it into living organic cosmic forms. These are the first and second volumes of the book of creation; they are as male and female; if male only they would remain alone without vitality or fruitfulness; there is a mystic union and communion; they live in unity; where the living conform to law there is life, growth, increase and blessing; this is law, and this is the Will of God.

It is well known that ideas, thoughts, signs, symbols, and even words and languages, are all in their order derived from the physical world. It would not be correct to say that the conception of scientific law is solely derived from this source; there is that in law which transcends cause and effect; and it finds its concept not in the related facts of order, but in will—man's will and God's Will; the man conceiving law as the concept beyond the order; and that law transcends the order, or cause and effect. When man tries to open the volume of psychology, it is certain that he has entered upon an entirely new study; he has, to begin with, transposed his order, because the materials of thought upon which he is engaged is within himself; he knows this to be the fact; it is a conscious truth he must accept; and thus it is quite natural that mental science, in the order of development, should precede that of physical psychology. It ought not to be assumed that there will be, in any sense, permanent conflict betwixt these two methods of enquiry; they are complementary, and both are required to get anything like a true and comprehensive concep-

tion of the realm of psychology. What is named mental science preceded physical psychology ; and the study of the mind, or soul, it may well be conceived, will go on for a long time after the laws of physical psychology are understood. By psychology the man studies the realm of his own soul ; this volume is the most mysterious of books ; it is very difficult to study. Thus the student, being ignorant of its mechanism, finds himself at great disadvantage ; he cannot read the book page by page ; it is a line here and a line there ; never a page or chapter ; it seems to be a chaotic book, with only a few familiar tracks. The conception here is not that the volume of the soul is really a chaos, because this is not so ; it is that the man when he begins the analysis finds that what he thought was a familiar home is in reality as complex as a great city, and as difficult to traverse as a maze. It must be noted that this stage of enquiry is not that of common experience, or of empiricism, it is scientific enquiry as to cause and effect, law and order, relations and conditions. If then, the mental scientist, in his truly scientific enquiry, had not preceded the physical psychologist, what hope would there have been of the latter making headway with his studies ? None whatever, because the relations of blood circulation, living tissues, nerve organs, special sense organs, sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and sensations, would never have explained the realm of the soul in all its wonderful complexity. This volume is not the physical volume developed ; it is a new psychic volume added to the physical one ; and yet in the adding it is so joined in mystic union as to form an addition to the one book. These mystic unions cannot be explained ; they can only be understood by analogy, or illustrated by what is similar ; and thus the familiar conception of Abraham and Isaac as one and two ; Jacob and Joseph as three and four, throw light upon this subject. Abraham is as the great inorganic vision of faith and living truth in God ; Isaac is as the life, the hope, the organised form in the land promised ; Jacob is as that wayward, wilful, self-seeking, repentant and restored spirit ; and, Joseph is as the beloved son, the mystery of love, the servant, the prisoner, the dreamer, the interpreter, the ruler and lord. This, however, is the ideal in Joseph, what follows is Israel in Egypt ; the bondage, slavery, doom of death, and chaotic darkness. It is at this point mental science begins its operations from within, and physical psychology from without ; they are allies in the same great campaign, and so they ought to be the best of friends. It is not



necessary to enter into details as to these two methods of study ; it is enough to know that they have, to a large extent, surveyed the city in all its complexity ; and roads, streets, and lanes are known ; they have discovered the many windings in the maze, and they are convinced that this book will also, one day, be as familiar as those volumes, which deal with the physical world. But whilst, in an ideal sense, this rosy conception of the attainments of science in this very difficult psychic realm is conceded, it must be remembered that there is still much land to possess ; that this land is very wonderful, very complex, with very deep and dark ravines among the mountains ; and above all it is necessary to remember that the Canaanite is still there ; and he means to remain there so long as he can retain a foothold on the land of promise. This is a very old vision of the psychic realm of the soul ; it is true as parable and analogy ; and it must be the thorough work of science to root out every evil power that would rise in self-assertion ; to destroy every idol ; and to make this pleasant land as the Garden of the Lord. There is nothing to prevent this great conquest of man's soul for Christ ; and of mankind for God ; the lines of advance by physical psychology are conceived as physical laws ; the spirit of man and the means by which it works, by physical organs and mental thoughts, are being carefully studied and placed in scientific order ; but men will require to consider carefully, and ponder much, upon the mystery of the human spirit, and the mystic soul. The soul is still absorbent, dark and lawless ; therefore, what men require to watch and pray for, to try to attain, is that new heart and right spirit, upon which the laws of God will be found to be written ; by these there will be made manifest the radiation of the divine glory.

These four volumes may be conceived as the revelation of the physical and psychical realms of thought ; they have advanced beyond the stages of experience and empiricism ; and in them to a large extent the sovereignty of law is recognised, or may be said to reign. Perhaps this is granting too much, but if faith and hope are realised, and the patient labours of scientific workers are fully acknowledged, then they may be encouraged to work more truly and earnestly in their fields of science. The fifth volume, now to be briefly considered, is not, from the standpoint of psychology, thought of as of so much importance ; the general impression being that it is only an evolution from what is lower, or part of the mind as an organic unity. The conception here is entirely different ; it

is a new and a separate volume, and it is very important to understand this truth in the light of the law of development. When a man reflects upon his own mind as a psychic realm, it is plain that he has no real conception of all that is involved in, or stored up within his soul ; only a small, very minute, portion is, so to speak, placed at one time under the eye of the spirit ; and thus only upon full and very wide considerations of what is known, is the immense capacity of the mind faintly understood. This knowledge is evasive, even under careful introspective study ; and thus it may be helpful to use, as analogy, the ideal that is found in Moses. As pointed out, each type adds a new realm of thought and study ; and the complexity increases greatly with each succeeding type. It is not easy to grasp the thought that Joseph and Egypt are such a complex study ; and that as psychic truth they sum up all that is contained in all the generations in Genesis. It is still more difficult to conceive the thought that a man, as an empiric, psychic being, is analogous with Israel in Egypt. If these truths are seen, as revelations of development, then there ought to be wide psychic reflection ; and the question to be raised is this, by what means is redemption from the powers of the world, from psychic environment and limitations, to be attained ? It is not assumed here that in the psychic realm of experience and empiricism there is no reasoning powers or moral ideals ; it is that as yet these are in an undeveloped state, with latent unconscious powers that are about to be wakened into life and active operation. It is not assumed that in the individual man, for example, there are at definite stages of development new powers created that spring into being, but rather that all the powers possessed by man are possessed from the beginning ; and that they are made manifest at definite stages in the man's history. As with the man, so with mankind ; the development goes on in due order, and the powers are made manifest if, and when, the environment and latent powers are called into living action. The conscious opening of this volume, therefore, it will be seen, is very important ; and as a revelation in the realm of grace, it is equivalent to conversion, to being born again, and as becoming a spiritual child of God. These are familiar modes of thought with religious people ; the symbolism lives in their souls ; they are truths of psychic experience and of reasoned thought ; and it may well be that they do not quite understand the true scientific relations of this complex problem. The point here is that the student has entered upon the study of the fifth

volume ; and it is important that he should understand in what way it is related to the fourth, in what it transcends that book, and also at the same time enlarges and extends that volume. Even in this analogy of volumes of books it is seen that the comparison fails, because with Nature, Man, and the Bible, men are dealing with what is living ; what possesses a unity of being and harmony ; whilst with volumes of books, there is dead form and separate things. It is difficult to see how this can be avoided, the remedy must be found in spiritual thoughts and in getting beyond the signs to the thoughts signified.

It has been suggested that the student has no adequate conception of what is here conceived as the contents of the soul, or mind, as developed to the stage of experience and empiricism ; and that only by the most careful introspective study is a portion of this knowledge realisable through the memory. Help may be obtained by the analogy of Moses, redemption from Egypt, and the Desert experiences, if used to illustrate what is here named the fifth volume. As related to man the problem is that of the intellect ; it is to gain reasonable knowledge of good and evil ; it is to attain to godship, and even, it may be, to eat of the tree of life, and to live for ever. As related to Moses and Israel it is the bondage of Egypt, redemption from slavery, freedom, liberty, law, education, conflict, victory, the Jordan, and the sight of the promised land. If this fifth volume is studied from this standpoint, it will prove useful, in this sense, that the microcosmic soul will be seen as in its relative proportions. The story of Egypt and the Desert, as a passing drama of the history of a nation, is for forty years ; but away beyond these men may discern the great macrocosm of mankind, and that weary, dreary desert of life, in which all men have been wandering all through the ages. This is the spiritual vision in the fifth volume ; the advance columns have reached the land of Moab ; a new generation is rising up, and the spiritual land of the promises will be possessed. How intensely interesting will the study of this great volume become as the years roll past. It is a very wonderful book ; and who would suspect that shorter and longer epitomes of it are stored up within the souls of men. The object in view here is not the details of Egypt and the Desert, but to suggest the use of them as a means of recognising, in some faint measure, this marvellous intellectual endowment possessed by man, by which he is raised to a spiritual state of glory akin to that of the cherubim in heaven.

What can be said about this fifth volume as related to science, and to law as the Will of God ? As explained, science has, in a measure, discovered the relations of the four volumes, but the fifth division of the fifth volume is not in scientific order ; it is a straggling, imperfect, undisciplined hoard of pilgrims and strangers upon the earth, from Egypt to the river Jordan. There are those who are still in Egyptian bondage, in slavery, making bricks to glorify kings ; those who have held the Passover Feast, and are redeemed ; those who have escaped from Egypt, and are able to sing the song of deliverance ; those who thirst for the living water ; those who hunger for bread ; those who are compelled to fight with Amalek ; those who are at Mount Sinai, and hear the Voice of God in moral law ; those who have made to themselves golden images, and worship idols ; those who have received the symbols of things in heaven ; have conceived them to be true ideals, and worshipped them as idols. There are those who do not understand that the whole of the Desert life is pageant in appearance ; that the spiritual has outgrown the visible ; that priest, altar, sacrifice, purification, atonement, in fact the whole procession from Egypt to Palestine, from the womb to the grave, was all sign and symbol, shadow and image, school books for children, and not the spiritual realities of the kingdom of heaven. Here men must pause and think ; it is to be feared that they are not really so far advanced heavenward as they thought ; true scientific workers are required here ; the vision is more chaos than cosmos, and yet this is the great realm of truth and error, good and evil, of the opened eyes, where the gods dwell, and where the serpent tempts, beguiles, betrays, deceives, and destroys. It is well to perceive such a vision as this, for it destroys the glamour and the halo that surrounds the evil one. Men ought not to complain if the hateful idol is cast down and cast out of the sacred shrine ; but this they ought to do, they should cry to the Strong for strength, to the Allwise Spirit for divine wisdom ; and for grace to see the glory of Christ, as the Light and the Life of the world.

If then this fifth volume of the Book of God is unfinished, and not found to be in perfect scientific order, What can the conception be of the twin sixth volume ; that book of true moral law, which men hope to find upon this earth, in individuals, and in the governments of nations ? When such a question is asked, in such a world as this, what can men do but look around in amazement wondering from whence the question came, and

whether the questioner is a visionary, or sane, as the men of this world think of sanity? This question really rises out of the study of the fifth volume; the true and righteous order of moral law should be written, with its relations and conditions therein; but men search for it in vain; it is not found, and if the evil one gets his way it never will be. What can these things mean? They mean this, that the moral nature of man, in the spiritual sense, has been subject to the intellect; the intellect has directed and guided the perverted spirit; self and selfishness have had the ascendancy, and thus the moral law as guide was shut out as unwelcome, or forced into bondage and degrading service. The selfish servant usurped power and made the man, the son, a slave, and there has been issued for the use of mankind, the devil's law book that glories in pride, power, wealth, war, and innumerable immoral evils. Is this false testimony, or is it fact? Let men study for themselves the devil's sixth volume, bearing his signature, and it is very strange if in the light of true moral law, the summation of which is love to God and love to man, they do not reach the conclusion that mankind has been befooled by the evil one to the fullest extent; and men have been found worshipping and serving the devil, even whilst asserting that they were the servants of God. This is a work that will require to be written as by the hand of God; it is promised that it will be written upon the hearts of men; that, in fact, this sixth volume will be the most charming of all the volumes, because men reading therein will see the face of God, and be changed as from glory to glory into His likeness. Men have hoped that ethical teachers and moral philosophers would write this sixth volume; it has been suggested that wise, sagacious, far-seeing statesmen have undertaken this great work; all kinds of peoples, classes and religions have promised to produce this sixth volume; but, as yet, it is not to be found. There was only one man who could have done it; but in His day the worship of the devil and evil was supreme upon the earth. He lived the moral life perfectly; but few, very few, if any, could then read the letters He wrote in the language of Heaven. It is written that His Spirit is with men, and that He will lead them into all truth; and thus men still have hope that the Gracious Spirit of Truth will write this precious sixth volume, so that men may read therein and understand the moral law of God as that life that is Christlike in character. But, it may be suggested

here that men ought not to expect this sixth volume to come to them as by a direct messenger from heaven in some magical way. The days for such foolish conceits are past ; thus if men will think wisely and well about this matter, they will do so in the light of law ; that is to say it is the sanctified intellect, science that has got to put this whole realm in order by destroying the devil's work, and by putting in true scientific order those affections, desires and aspirations of the soul which are at present surrounded by darkness, being dia-magnetic to the Will of God. If men prefer to think upon this matter in the useful symbols of Israel and the promised land, then the vision is there to be studied. Joshua is the captain, the Canaanites are to be destroyed, and the land is to be possessed. But let there be no mistake as betwixt symbol and spiritual reality ; for Israel had its sixth volume written in symbol ; the people knew not the meaning of the book ; they became earthly, sensual idolaters ; and thus the Commonwealth passed away ; and men could not enter in and possess the spiritual realm of truth, because of their unbelief. But men of the Christian age may say, these records about the nation of Israel have nothing to do with us ; they are ancient history, and we live in an enlightened spiritual age far away from semi-barbarous Israel and the Desert. Is this so, and is it possible that men can be so spiritually blind as not to see that they have been actually fulfilling what was symbol in the Desert—what was specially set up for warning and instruction, so that in all reasonableness men might avoid those very conditions in which they now find themselves ? In the language of the Bible all is desert where God is not known, honoured and obeyed ; where the sacred moral law is trodden under foot and where the river of Grace is not renewing and refreshing the earth and the souls of men. It is not denied that the river of God, like the river of Egypt, brings blessing along its banks ; but, what about the deserts unblessed, where there is strife, war, lusting, covetousness and unrighteousness ? Is it not plain truth to all thoughtful men, that to expect moral redemption by Act of Parliament is utter folly. What can legislation do for men beyond permissive, prohibitive, or penal enactments ? These may be useful in a way ; but legal acts, in whatever form, will not regenerate and renew mankind. They are external and obligatory in the spirit of Mosaism ; and, as can be seen plainly, all that system of things is sign and symbol, lesson book and

schoolmaster, suitable for children, or for the punishment of foolish rebels, who do not understand the meaning of moral law. The truth here is that each man individually has, by the grace of God, to rise to moral manhood, with all that manhood means ; and that each man, as a unit of the great organic body, must act the moral manly part toward all other men with whom he has moral relations. This is where Israel failed to realise its opportunity ; each man selfishly took his portion in the possession ; became self-indulgent, self-assertive and utterly neglectful of the Commonwealth ; the moral network snapped to pieces at the individuals ; they became mutually repellent, and the end was bondage and subjection. Thus it will not be in the Divine Commonwealth because then men will know and understand that Christ is the Light of the World, to make manifest scientific moral order ; and as the Lord our Righteousness, His laws will be written upon every heart in the golden letters of love.

It is a somewhat serious survey that has been taken of these two very important volumes of knowledge, so necessary for the wellbeing of mankind ; still, there is a breath of hope in the very fact that when men see and know the truth, there is the probability that they will make an effort in the right direction to remove what is wrong. It is something to know that these six volumes of the truth of God, if men only possessed them in scientific form as law, and known and accepted as the Will of God, they would be upon the way to manhood ; and they would be within sight of the Promised Land, of the Kingdom of God. But, the way is the way to the Land, and, strange to say, the six volumes referred to have been here conceived as describing what the land is, or what men think it is like, or how it may be reached, or even how the people should live who dwell there. This is very interesting in its way, but the practical point to be considered, as briefly as possible, is the reports of those who have been in the land ; and what they have to say about the way and the land promised. This information is to be found in the seventh volume, the book of Grace in a special sense ; in other words, the Bible, as revealing to men the way of salvation. The Bible contains the details of the history of the way, and of the journeyings of men through the great Desert. All along the track there has been mercy and blessing, and the most fertile places upon the way are those where the dews and rain have fallen from heaven ; where men have drawn living Water from

the Rock and satisfied their souls with Bread from Heaven. All along the way there has been sign and symbol, light and blessing, shade by day and light by night ; the pilgrims may at times have found the way trying and difficult ; but the testimony has ever been that mercy has rejoiced over judgment ; and, that the dew-drops of sorrow shed upon the pathway have been lusted with the glowing light from heaven of the Divine Love. If mature reflection is given as to the knowledge men possess of this precious seventh volume, it will be seen that somehow they really know more about it than men generally know of the fifth and sixth volumes. Indeed the way is well known, and many, many books have been written about it ; but what is even more strange, it is amongst these pilgrims by the way that ever at intervals there has burst forth the sweetest songs of praise ; the gentle poets have visited the fair land and brought back to men the precious fruits that grow therein, and thus provided foretastes of what men hope to enjoy in the glory land. Cautious men have shaken their heads gravely over the glowing visions of the mystic dreamers ; but the visionaries are not to be despised ; they have made heaven more true and real ; they have shaken off the earthly dross that rested upon their wings, and they have brought back to men silver and gold-tipped wings, thus proving that they have been where the silver is refined, and the streets are paved with gold. It is a wonderful volume, that tells of patriarch and prophet, seer and saint, disciple and apostle, minister and martyr ; but, as men know, they are only the stray beams of light reflected from the Sun of all grace and glory, and thus any glory they possess is that which rests upon them because they have been near the King, and used by Him in His service. This seventh volume has in past ages concealed rather than fully revealed the King of Grace. He came to His own, but they did not recognise Him in His homely attire, and the issue was that they rejected, and put Him to death. Those who received Him, were abundantly blessed ; they were comforted and strengthened by the Divine thought, that a change had come in their position ; because through Him they had become the sons of God. It is now assumed, as a truth possible of scientific verification, that this seventh volume is actually a scientific work capable of being set in true intellectual order ; that amidst the apparent chaos and want of spiritual order in its visible structure, there lies within its own realm, an organised kingdom that surpasses all the



wonders of the physical world. That such a conception should be received as even possible is very wonderful ; but what men have to do now is not to stagger and fall through unbelief ; but to enquire carefully and most earnestly whether these things are so or not. This enquiry cannot be anything mystical or magical ; because, so far as science is concerned, it completely dispels and abolishes all false pretences. It is further claimed for this seventh volume that it, and it alone, holds the secret of by the unity and the harmony of all other sciences ; and that it is the light of the method of Christ that they are brought into light ; and, in His light, they discern their mutual relations, unity and harmony. If all this has any meaning it is that Christ is the revealed Spiritual Way to the Father and to Heaven ; that He is the Saviour of the world ; that by His divine self-sacrifice, as an atonement for sin, He is the Son of God in power and grace ; and that He is by His Spirit the Truth and Righteousness of God for men.

The key to this seventh volume is to be found in the well known Beatitudes uttered by Christ on the Mount at the beginning of His Ministry. The Blessings, in their order, require to be studied in the light of development, and when this is done it is found that they have that peculiar tone, or order, about them that is found in musical notes, in the colours upon the spectrum, and in many other departments of physical science. When this conception has been considered and then applied to the Sermon on the Mount as a whole, to the gospels and epistles, to the order of creation, and to the generations in Genesis, and synchronism is found to exist, then the issue is the conviction that the method permeates the whole Bible, and this is found to be a great truth worthy of careful consideration. The result that follows such a conviction is, that this is the intellectual order of the relations of the Bible, or the method of Christ ; no explanation can be given why it is so ; these are the facts as to the order of the arrangement ; and, if proved to be so, then in the language of science, this is law, and as Divine Law it is the Will of God. The Bible is thus conceived to be as truly scientific in its own place as nature or man ; it is the Divine Revelation of the Way of Salvation for mankind ; that is of the method of regeneration, redemption and restoration of fallen men to God. It is not to be conceived as a moral revelation of what men ought to be in the likeness of God ; but, it may well be that in the process of development from the chaos of earthliness to manhood, this

problem of moral manhood may be considered. It is necessary to reiterate this conception, time after time, that there is no scientific revelation of a true moral order in the Bible ; the emphasis throughout the Scriptures is not laid upon the moral man, his thoughts, affections, desires, duties or obligations ; but how man is to become moral ; how he misses his way time after time ; and, as by a side light, men may see that when the perfect moral Man was in the midst of men, they did not understand Him ; and they went so far astray as to say that He was not a good man, but that He was in league with the prince of the devils. When the sixth volume is written, and men are found pure of heart, then this complex subject will be better understood ; the moral can only be clearly, scientifically, understood by the moral ; at present men are dia-magnetic to pure moral truth ; if they were para-magnetic then they would see the face of God and live possessing the likeness of God. It is a strange thought that the sixth volume should remain so dark, as if the shadow of evil rested upon the soul. There is wickedness in the depths of the hearts of men, and it may well be that the moral nature cannot become light, true and right, until that mysterious purification of the heart is accomplished by the Spirit. Perhaps, all this ought to be conceived as rudimentary truths ; theoretically this may be so, but, as practical knowledge, this seems to be one of the very hardest lessons men have to learn.

The conception as to the Beatitudes is that they express the blessed state of those who are the followers of Christ. Each blessing is a law, and with each blessing there is conveyed a promise to be fulfilled, if there is conformity to the law. From the blessed state of being poor in spirit to that of suffering persecution for righteousness sake, the circle is that of the Kingdom of Heaven, or of grace, and it is remarkable that in these laws the spirit is absolutely free from all moral conditions which involve obligations and penalties. All who hear, follow, and obey, are left spiritually free ; if they receive the word, follow the Master, obey His words in His Spirit, then the result will be Heaven and the blessed state. This is the climax in word, in teaching, as to this Kingdom of Grace. Had those who were sitting at His feet that day been endowed with spiritual sight, and insight, they would certainly have seen the heavens open and the glory of God radiating from His person as the Divine Light. But is not this the glory of Grace, that it is the Divine Love shrouded,

hidden away in a human form ? Is not this the root idea in Grace, that it should descend, condescend, to be lowly, poor, meek, humble, merciful, peace-loving and patient ? Is there not in grace the conception of self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice for the good of others ? This is not the moral ideal ; it is to be gentle, kind, good, considerate, true, right, just, beneficent ; this is the good life, this is how good men ought to live, and this is how all men would live if they were morally good. It is not difficult to see that these conceptions are different, and it can easily be seen that these different orders of life are not contrary to each other. Further, it can be seen that the gracious laws cannot be made subject to the moral order, and that it would be out of place to make the moral laws subject to the laws of grace. It is quite true that both systems terminate in love, but the moral love is that of affection, gratitude, and thankfulness, in harmony with perfect obedience and conformity to moral law ; whilst the love of grace is different, it arises from the self-sacrifice of the Saviour in saving from sin, in redeeming from death, in restoring to favour, in bestowing many gracious blessings, and these come not through manhood, but by the prodigal life, the broken heart, the chastened spirit, and the renewed will. The two realms can and do co-exist side by side in the human soul, and if men do not quite understand these things, it is matter of thankfulness that the Gracious Spirit does ; and when the disciples have advanced a little further in their studies, this matter will be made more plain to them. To put this matter in another light, the laws of man's permanent being are moral, they synchronise with all that is true, good and right ; the laws of grace are restorative and remedial ; they renew the fallen man ; and, in the process of the renewal, there is added glory, for the man becomes a son of God. There is difficulty in seeing clearly these varied aspects of the development of the Kingdom of Grace ; it is development from below upwards ; it follows the order in nature and in man, and thus the real difficulty is in man, for he is the subject of this great work of God ; he looks at it during the period of development, and he fails because he has no scientific standard of measurement. It is because science has given to man the power to look at all these problems from the Divine stand-point of law that he can now stand with the light of heaven in his eyes and see all down the ages, and through the varied periods of development, and in spirit sit down with a glad and thankful heart upon the footstool

of the Divine Mercy. Truly this seventh volume of the Book of God is wonderful beyond conception ; if men would try and grasp the thought, it is Divine Grace all the way : that is to say, it is the hidden, self-sacrificing, Divine Love from beginning to end, and this is the mystery that men have not solved, which they do not seem to understand even to this day.

There is another subject in connection with the study of this seventh volume which calls for special attention, and the most careful consideration of all the servants of Christ. The remarks to be made are not contentious, the desire is to state plainly, truly, and faithfully, thoughts that arise out of this study of the Word of God. It has been suggested that the Kingdom of Grace is that which is specially revealed to men in the Beatitudes ; that from the beginning it has been shrouded in a kind of mystery that men did not understand ; that mystery is revealed in Christ as well as hidden in Him, and the revealing and hiding have gone on age after age. The revealing has been in the development, and the hiding has been there also, because, as so often pointed out, men would not hear the Voice of God ; they would not believe His word, or listen to His servants ; they would take their own ways ; they would seek after good and evil ; they thought they were even as the gods, and that their eyes were open to all knowledge. In every new stage of development God by His Spirit advanced before men. He revealed new realms of thought to them, and they as persistently failed to respond to the Voice and Will of God. It matters not what period of history is considered, the story is ever the same, God revealed ; men would not understand ; they disobeyed the Divine Voice and they fell. Abraham saw the Divine Vision of redemption by faith, yet the end was Egypt. Moses became the deliverer, the people of Israel heard the law at Sinai, they worshipped their idol, the golden calf, they were rejected and perished in the desert. Joshua became the type of moral man and Canaan was possessed ; but the end was the fall of the Commonwealth and of moral man. God sent forth Samuel with the Word to save men, to be their gracious guide, friend, saviour ; they rejected God and Grace, and preferred a man, like Saul, because he would be their king and captain, and then they would be like other nations in the earth, and the end was Babylon and the captivity. There was a gracious restoration, a preparation, the Advent of the King of Grace ; the Jews rejected Him, and Jew and Roman put Him to death ; the end was the

destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews. At that time there commenced the spiritual development and manifestation of the Kingdom of Grace for the Gentiles of the West; they inherited the Old Testament through the Jews, the Gospels and Epistles through disciples and apostles, and thus they were entrusted with the Word of God, and the great revelation of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world. What then, did Christians do better than the Jews and the ancient nations? Or has it so fallen out that they also have perverted their ways and changed that Divine revelation from its original glory to a something that is utterly unlike the kingdom of Grace? How very soon the departure from a pure spiritual religion took place may be traced in the Epistle to the Galatians; and in how many ways the truth became perverted may be inferred from the Book of Revelation. What must be set in the very forefront here is the Christ, the Beatitudes, the Divine Example, the Gospels, the repeated warnings to disciples, the Great Life in all its simplicity, beauty, humility, self-denial, and self-sacrifice, followed by the shameful betrayal, the desertion, the trial, the Crucifixion, death, and the glorious resurrection and Ascension into glory. The day of Pentecost, the coming of the Spirit with power, and the proclamation of the Gospel in East and West, confirmed the revelation of the spiritual revolution that had taken place; and all these things were revealed to men as the summation of the Kingdom of Grace and the sealing up of the Word of God to men for their salvation. Christ is the Ideal; He is the Type for men to follow in the Kingdom of Grace; and special warning was given that the disciples should not be ambitious to rule over others; that they should not be like the Gentiles in seeking lordship and power, but that they should be humble ministers of the Gospel, witnesses to men of the mercy and love of God. The laws are very definite and plain for all who enter this fellowship of the meek and lowly Jesus Christ; they are to be poor of spirit, not proud and lordly; mournful and sorrowful because of sin and evil, not sinful evil doers; meek and gentle in spirit, not arrogant and haughty; desirous to know the truth and do right, not double-faced and double-tongued party men working unrighteousness; merciful and compassionate toward the erring and sinful, not unkind and cruel; pure of heart, desiring to be Christ-like, not perverted evil thinkers in the image of the evil one; peace-loving

and peace-making, imitating Christ, not stirrers up of strife, hatred, ill-will, and war ; and when persecuted, patient, enduring suffering even to death, and not resenting or persecuting in return those who persecuted. But men will say, as they have said in the past, these are laws of perfection ; even of the perfect Kingdom of Grace ; they are too high, men cannot attain to them ; and because they are so high, noble, and beautiful, they are to be admired, set up in a place of honour, and the attention of men drawn to them as the lofty conceptions of the Christian religion as compared with other religions. What do men mean when they say that this perfection places the laws of Grace beyond practical use ? Do they agree with the fact that the laws are perfect in their own sphere ? Do they think that the Divine Lord of Grace would make known laws of grace that are imperfect ? Do they excuse themselves from obeying these laws because of their perfectness ? It must be clearly understood here that this is the region of scientific law ; that it is truly positive law ; and that it is not like Mosaism, negative and symbolic. It is here that the spiritual is laid bare before the eyes of men, light is thrown upon the narrow way of life, and the Voice is heard saying, " This is the way, walk ye in it." This is the way He trod upon the earth ; it is the way His followers have sought to tread ; they have not found fault with it because it is so perfect, but with themselves because they could not walk in it with perfect hearts. Men would act as unreasonably if they complained of the perfection of electric and magnetic laws, or of vital physical laws, as they do when they deprecate the laws of grace, and set them aside as too perfect. They are perfect for the service they have to perform, and that is the regeneration, renewal, and restoration of the soul to God. If they are proved to be suitable for that purpose then they are the laws for that end, and they are not to be used for intellectual or moral ends. The intellect will prove the true relations of all laws ; the moral nature will prove the fitness of moral laws for the true, good, righteous life ; and the laws of grace will prove that they are the means by which there is salvation and restoration of the fallen to likeness to Christ. This is the way science takes to resolve what is chaos into an ordered cosmos ; there must be this definite, clear thinking ; separation of things that differ ; all set in order in their kingdoms, classes, orders, families, genera, species, varieties : and the great vision of science for the future is this marvellous cosmos of the works of God, in nature, man and the Bible.

It must follow from these principles that the supreme efforts of all scientific thinkers will tend more persistently and determinedly to the knowledge of, and conformity to, law. They will see that lawlessness, want of knowledge of law, disobedience to law, can only bring evil upon men. It is by law that they will test the actions of men, and convict them of their lawlessness, because they do not know or wilfully disobey law. It can hardly be expected that the sixth volume, that of moral law, will be set in order before the seventh, that of grace ; it is possible that they will proceed side by side ; but the light to illuminate the moral realm will be derived from that of grace. Here, then, arises the important problem of this realm of grace in the world, and whether this is, at present, in the state of lawlessness or law abiding ? Now this is not a question of a Church, or of Churches, or of any outward organisation that is as symbol or sign ; it goes much deeper, because it deals with the spiritual everywhere, and with the relations of the souls of men to the Lord Christ, the sole and only King in the Kingdom of Grace. The question to be asked is whether Churches, societies, religious bodies, conform to and obey the laws of grace in their individual members ; and, as arising out of spiritual membership in the body of Christ, do all such bodies conform to the Divine spiritual order of grace ? The day is past for men to protest against this method of dealing with this question ; the judge now is law, not tradition, position, authority, learning, one man, or associations of men ; it is law, and it is law as the Will of God.

There can be no doubt that this matter is not one of easy solution ; men require to look within, around, below, and above, to see where they are being guided ; and they have to put the subject to themselves in all forms, in order to grasp these fundamental principles. If, for example, the physical and psychical realms are thought upon as an earthly house inhabited and utilised by men up to the stage of experience and empiricism, this includes all the lower creation in that order men know as the empiric world, as distinct from that other world, where the intellect, not satisfied with empiricism, searches after good and evil in that higher sense of cause and effect, order, law. This difference is clearly understood by scientific men ; and they know that it is here, whether as philosophy or by the inductive order of study, that the conflicts attributed to science find their origin. Things are not what they appear to be ; empiricism might rest content with what seems

to be true ; but science will not, it has a different spirit ; the quest upon which it sets out is to find truth, and the immediate result is conflict about what is true ; and the inextricable maze of good and evil. The first result of this struggle has been that of strife and misunderstanding betwixt empiricism and the scientific spirit ; not that science is wrong in its purpose, its aims, but being ignorant as to perfect science, proud of knowledge attained, and self-assertive, there has been intolerance on both sides with those not supposed to be enlightened by wisdom. During the ages of struggle this contest has assumed many forms, but, as a rule, it may be found true, that those educated philosophically, to the stage of scientific thought attained, have ruled over men, and thus in a true sense it has been by intellectual power that men have been governed. The position is being changed ; it is now assumed that the intellect of man is not lord, but limited servant, and that the true office of this most valuable servant is to put the whole universe of the thoughts of men in their related order. But the house is a moral chaos, good and evil repel each other ; therefore it may be said that the intellect tried to make the best of a very bad condition of things ; there could not be rule by law where all was anarchy, and thus history is the record of this experiment of government by arbitrary rule in place of Divine law. The lord of the house lost his power ; thus moral law and goodness were trampled under foot, and the intellect as ruler, say usurper, framed laws of a temporary kind to keep the servants in subjection and the house in order. Now, it is clear that this usurping servant was not the authorised lord over the house in man ; that lord had become a bond-slave unable to recover power and authority and thus there was no way out of the difficulty, no means of changing anarchy into order. The only person who could intervene for good was the supreme Lord, and this special intervention is named by men the Kingdom of Grace ; and the history of that intervention is to be found in the Bible. What the supreme Lord did was to resume His right and authority ; it pleased Him in His grace to set up His House of Grace upon the earth in man, and by means of this House He brings in a new life—regeneration. He renews the conditions of life by redemption, and the end of His purpose in grace is the complete restoration of the moral house as glorified by grace. Men have not had, in the past, any true conception of this great work in history, as carried out by the Lord of Grace



and Glory in His life and death, and as continuously developed by the Holy Spirit, but now they see that it involves two distinct ends, these being the restoration of the individual to the image of Christ, and of mankind to conformity to the Will or laws of God. This conception is that found in the Bible and repeatedly used to illustrate what man as redeemed is individually, and what all the saved are collectively; the man is a temple in himself, and he is also a living stone in the Temple of God, a stone which is the epitome of the whole creation in the temple. The point to be seized here is that this temple cannot be understood by studying it from below upwards, from the physical to the spiritual, but, the spiritual dispels the darkness; the breeze of the Spirit clears away all mists; and lo! there bursts upon the vision of man the Temple of God in its glory as law, the revealed Will of God.

This is a mystic vision, but the conception is spiritual and it is the goal of science. It is here that all the powers in nature and in man are put in their true order; it is grace that reigns; the moral order is restored; the intellect by science is the cherubic servant in the light of truth, and the chaos of nature and man are seen to be resolving into an ordered cosmos of law. This is not law external as derived from nature alone; it is law spiritual, the nature of man, and the order in both are the same. Here it may be profitable to inquire, Why this renewal and restoration could not be brought about by external laws, as by forms of worship, by State made laws, or by philosophic thought? The reply must be that these cannot regenerate the man; and more, these could only reflect the stage of the attainment of mankind in its development. Why not by a regeneration and renewal of man, as person, and as separate from mankind? The same reply has to be given: the man represents his environment and he is in vital union with it. The revolt of mankind against law is not only personal, it is also collective, and it enters into the very being of society; man cannot live for himself alone; he is as a cell or organ in the body social, and there is no means of breaking this hereditary unity. Here arises one of those very intricate problems of thought which requires careful consideration. How is it, some men seem to ask, that God did not put down this revolt at the first, and thus prevent all the sad history of the past? This question, it must be observed, is not one as dealing, in any sense, with the secret things of God; it is in the light of science and law, that is of what God has been pleased to reveal to men.

It is conceived that the Will of God is Law; that law is definite order; and that the order rises as by stages from force or energy to the moral nature of man. The thought is a strange one that although there is gradation, higher and lower relatively, in reality spiritually all is law. If there is revolt in the spiritual realm of the intellect, or of morals, in what way could the laws of physics, heat, electricity or magnetism affect the moral realm of law? In other words, will not the lawless be lawless in its own realm, and will not that which is lower in grade be involved in the lawlessness of the higher grade? Mere power, therefore, as wielded by Zeus or Thor, has no moral meaning; the lawless in the one realm will not command the action of the law-abiding, or the lawless, in another realm; each realm has individuality, and yet they are so constituted that the physical and psychical are subject to the spiritual. It is not very difficult to follow the order of the lawless with the results that follow: in the physical world it is chaos, and spiritually want of knowledge of the physical forces; in the organic, disease and death; in the spirit, perversion of the vision as to true relations; in the mind and soul, darkness, lust, passion; in the intellectual, false thoughts, ideas, concepts, lies, and misrepresentations; and, in the moral nature evil, hatred, strife, war and murder. Limiting the thoughts to man, as moral, under Divine law, would it be correct to say that the effect of lawlessness is penal and not remedial? Care must be taken here to comprehend the limitations of laws; that they are Divine order; and thus the question if these are broken, and, as illustrated by magnetic action, become mutually repellent, How is the lawless to be changed into the lawful, and unity and harmony restored? This, it seems, is where the study of law, as the Will of God, lands the student; there is not found in the moral laws, as such, and in all that is subject to them, that which is conceived as remedial power; it is conceived that laws may be lawful and right, or rules lawless and wrong; if lawful, then they are as para-magnetic in light as law; if lawless, then as dia-magnetic, dark and contrary to law.

If then these conceptions are in harmony with the facts, it would appear that the evil effects of the broken moral law are disastrous; there is no remedy in the moral and the natural to remedy what is wrong; moral law cannot save the lawless, and the lawless, having become repellent to good, cannot change itself into good. It is here that the realm of grace comes in, not from nature or man, but from God; and this is a new Kingdom,

with a new purpose, and that purpose is this very necessity of man ; it is the remedial not the penal ; not destruction but salvation. But here also the Divine Will is Law, and the strange thing is that there is embodied in this Kingdom that which will change the lawless into the law-abiding, and in process of time, not only remedy, but reverse that which has become lawless. The lawless works to anarchy and ruin ; law in Grace works for moral law, and for changing into a cosmos that which was reduced to chaos. How is this done ? This is the problem that is worked out in the Bible and in mankind ; it enters the moral nature of man, and then it is seen that pride, power, strife, hatred, slavery, war, and all evil-doing is wrong ; it touches the intellect and it is seen that evil is built upon self and selfishness, error, lies, unbelief and scepticism. But this is not a simple matter of light and darkness, as in the physical world, where the one would exclude the other ; it is a great spiritual problem in truth and error good and evil, right and wrong ; and, in the lower stages of development, even in the spiritual realm, error may override truth and wrong triumph over right. For example, if the realm of Grace, or, as men say, the Church, is taken, and the laws of the Kingdom, as found in the Beatitudes, are applied to those who rule therein, What is the result ? The first law is that the follower of Christ should be like his Master, poor in spirit ; and yet men have seen a whole line of imperial despots reigning over the Church in power and great glory, crowned with a triple crown and asserting dominion over the earth, heaven and hell. Men are taught to mourn because of sin ; but if history gives a true record of facts, Where has sin more abounded than in the Christian Church ? Christians have as their special spirit, that they be meek and lowly ; but where will greater pride, self-assertion and domination be found than amongst ecclesiastical functionaries ? Men are blessed when they seek after truth and righteousness ; let men scan the history of the Church in matters of dogma, ritual, ceremony, and where will greater intolerance be found as related to truth, and less conformity to the life of righteousness ? Mercy is the Divine attribute in love to the sinful ; but the mercilessness of the Church is written in letters of blood. It is the pure in heart that see God ; it has been asserted that only the clergy have a right to look upon the face of God ; and do they not say that they are mediators and priests for this purpose ? Yet, in their ignorance, self-assertion and self-importance, they

do not speak what is true, for, in the realm of the Spirit, there is only One Mediator and High Priest, and all ministers of the Gospel are His servants and the servants of those who are being redeemed from evil. It is those who love peace and try to be peacemakers that are the children of God ; but what is the record of Church and State for centuries, but jealousy, strife, hatred, war ? If by their works men are known, and not by their pretences and dogmas, then all such men are the children of evil and not the sons of God. The persecuted are the blessed ; here it is better simply to state that in all ages, those who have conceived themselves to be the authorised servants of God, have been persecutors of prophets, saints, and the faithful followers of Christ. In their ignorance they have done these things ; they have been entrusted with the house of Grace ; and by the laws of the house and Kingdom they are condemned as having been lawless servants, working their own wills, seeking their own ends, and thus bringing discredit upon their Saviour, Master and Lord. Men say, Where is the mystery of evil, and where does it work ? And here in the very house of God's Grace is the devil of darkness and sin, ever trying to destroy or pervert, what is for the Salvation of mankind.

It must be confessed that such thoughts as these are grave and serious ; they are not what men expect ; they are not what men will be ready to accept as a fair and true reading of history, or as a right interpretation of the thoughts and actions of men. If they are biassed in any way they will be proved to be wrong ; but, if these thoughts are the utterance of science and law, then they cannot be rejected, or set aside ; they mean that the light of judgment has come upon the house of Grace, and upon all the servants in that house, and, when the voice of law is heard, then the lawless may well remain dumb as without excuse. Indeed what can men do but cry to the wise Spirit for wisdom, and to the All-merciful for mercy and forgiveness. If in thus indicating in what way law works in the house of Grace, there is such a revelation of lawlessness and unfaithfulness, then this ought not to be a cause for boasting in the moral realm of the State, or in the intellectual world with its manifold interests, because, assuredly, when they in their turn are tested by law, as the will of God, it is not to be expected that they will shine in truth and radiate the light of righteousness. Law, as thus viewed, is inexorable and infallible ; against Divine law there is no appeal ; the excep-

tion being that marvellous Kingdom of Grace, which is a system of law for overthrowing lawlessness ; and, the means of blessing to law-breakers, when they turn from their evil ways and seek to be reconciled to God in Christ.

Is there an eighth volume of this Book of God, this great revelation of truth and of Divine Law ? It is seen that the seventh volume consists of laws which have to do with the state of the soul of man in the sight of God ; they are laws that are subjective and they reach the heart of man from the Beatitudes uttered by Christ, through the Spirit. The sixth volume of laws are usually summed up as the relations and duties of men to God ; and of men toward each other. As in devotion to God as supreme ; purity of spiritual worship ; the sacredness of the Name and all that this covers ; and the remembrance of the Sabbath as sign that all creation is creature of God and sacred. Toward men the duties are kinship in honouring parents, the sacredness of life, love, the purity and sanctity of home and person, equity, justice, of respect for the rights of others, the sanctity of truth, honesty of purpose and unselfishness and absence of covetous desire. The seventh volume of law contemplates all that exists in Mosaism, and in the true moral life, and thus what is considered is what men ought particularly to be in themselves, by the new Christ life, as the counter-influence against the powers and realm of evil. These new powers are summed up as poorness of spirit, or humility, sorrow because of evil, meekness, desire to know and be right ; then there is a change in order, the new life breaks out of the soul and the impelling motives are mercy and pity, purity of thought and purpose, the desire to make peace, and patient gratitude and thanks rising to joy and gladness under persecution. It is here that the eighth volume with its laws may be said to begin ; it is to be summed up not in being and willing, but in suffering and enduring. Here is a whole volume of the Divine laws and of their operations in history, and men have not, it would seem, set themselves seriously to consider and set in order this realm of Divine truth. What is this volume, as related to other volumes ? Surely it is the Life of Grace as in harmony with the being and willing in the seventh ; even as the moral is similarly linked with the intellectual ; the mind or soul with the spirit ; and the physical life with physical energy. It can be seen that this volume is actually required ; and the Divine Life of Grace will

not be perfect without it. In this way the thoughts of men are led on from stage to stage, not in the order of development merely, but in that which is being developed, for this, assuredly, is also an ultimate principle of thought, existing from the foundation of the world, and witnessed in the murder of Abel by his brother. Now that the divine light is thus falling upon its pages, it may not be so very difficult a study to trace its development throughout the Word of God and in history. The thought that emerges here is a deeply interesting one, worthy of careful attention, and it may be summed up in this form: assuming that men began to study the works of God, in nature and man, they would say that this book might be conceived as six volumes; but when they begin to study man's fallen state they would see that a seventh volume is required to express in order all that Christ has been for salvation; and going on a stage further, the conviction would come that an eighth volume is necessary to deal with the life that is sacrifice and suffering. This lesson has to be learned, and remembered, that man requires to limit the range of his own knowledge, and also be prepared to learn what may be contained in those developing volumes of God's great Book of Revelation. It is not necessary to consider the details of this volume at this stage of enquiry, or to consider what relations it may have specially with the realm of evil; it is apparent that they are intimately correlated; thus, it may be that they would form a concurrent study. As indicating the line of thought, the conception is that man, as a son of God, as guided by the laws of the seventh volume, finds himself in the midst of wicked men; by what laws are his actions to be guided when persecuted? (1.) In faith with his eyes turned Godward he will not resist evil even though it mean the martyr's death, as with Abel. (2.) In hope, even as in the midst of suffering and calumny, there is comfort and consolation, as with Noah. (3.) In patience, there is the setting of the thoughts Godward and heavenward, to the land promised and to the city built by God, as with Abraham. (4.) As in patient obedient love, in the mystery of sacrifice, as revealed in Isaac. (5.) As in forgiveness of evil-doers as taught in Joseph, Moses and Job. (6.) As in patient endurance under the tyranny of the enemy as fully illustrated in the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others, during the downfall of Israel and the Exile. (7.) As in Divine Gracious Love in Christ the King of Grace. (8.) As in Christ the Divine sacrifice for sin as enduring

the Cross, shame, and a degrading death. The lines of thought would be a profitable study, which would consider in detail, in what way the apparent success of evil is met with and nullified and made the means of blessing to men, as in Adam and Christ, Abel and Seth, Samuel, Saul and David, Stephen and Paul. In fact, this principle is now fully recognised in these words, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

In this study of law, as revealed in the method of Christ, the wish has been to limit the work to the eightfold order, so that there might be concentration into this one system of thought as found in the Bible, nature, and man. It must not be concluded that this is the only method, nor even that it is the chief method, because as already shown, in other books, the four-fold method of the Spirit is as clearly traceable; and the twelve-fold method of the kingdom is very remarkable in the fulness of its order. The same may be said of the two sixes as natural and spiritual, and there is certainly another series in three sets of four easily traced. In fact, it would seem that the Bible is doubly complex, in this sense, that it has an onward development as a whole, and also that it has many beginnings; and from each beginning there is development in many forms all running on concurrently and in complete harmony. It is as if a man was contemplating a very complex intricate machine; it is with much study that the details and the relations of the great machine in all its divisions are known and understood; there are wheels going forward, backward, and side ways, and yet they are all one machine devised for one great work. It is like this with the Bible, there is a similar complexity, and the study of the machinery is not enough; for there is also this very extraordinary thought, that an imperfect living machine is actually renewing and restoring itself, and being improved to a Divine ideal whilst the machinery is in constant motion. This is a problem for the skilful mechanician; it is something worth thinking about, even if impossible in physical things; it ought to be equally interesting for the biologist, the psychologist and pathologist; and it is possible that they may get many hints to assist them in their studies of the natural, if they were more familiar with this Divine new creation, which is a regeneration, a renewal, and a restoration. In this study the biologist ought to be at home; all his thoughts are permeated with conceptions of life, development, order; he is actually on the verge of the spiritual; for his thoughts when

placed in their order are spiritual ; they are the laws of God, transfiguring, and ever changing matter and forms ; and there is no rest possible for the throbbing brain, and conflicting thoughts but in God, who thus reveals His immanence in His works.

There may be a little difficulty felt with those who are not scientific thinkers in the terms so often used, "empiricism" and "science" ; for the sake of those who may not quite apprehend these technical, but very expressive, terms, a few words of explanation may be helpful. The meaning of "empiricism" is limited to knowledge gained by the special senses by simple thoughts, ideas, related thoughts, and complex words, signs and symbols, as in language. By experience children attain to one stage of knowledge even before they begin to talk ; they attain to another by the use of language before they go to school ; they attain another stage when they are taught the meaning of abstract signs ; they are taught to compare and reason about the relations of these signs ; with the business of life there comes technical knowledge in manifold ways ; and, with due deference, it may be suggested that even the learned professions, with the exception of certain branches of their education, really live, move, and have their being in empiricism. If, for example, a barrister reasons upon what he considers to be the science of law, it is not to be understood that he is dealing with Divine laws that are known and cannot be changed, he deals with the history of laws made by men, found needful in the past, and he constantly refers to precedent and authority. What the barrister studies, and applies, is empiric, it is taken from men, books, history ; but the hope is entertained that, to some extent, this system of law may be in harmony with Divine law. Turning to theology, proudly termed the queen of the sciences, it would appear that the question may fairly be raised whether any such science exists. It is assumed that theologians study the Word of God to find its unity and harmony, its plan and purpose, and they form definite lines of thought which they believe to be true, and these they place in order as dogmas of the faith, as catechisms, as ritual and ceremony ; but the suggestion here is that this is empiricism, not science and Divine Law ; and, further, that law, as the Will of God, is not attainable by this means. To name theology, empiricism, and not science, will not alter the facts ; it must be granted to the full that theologians have been learned men, philosophers, lovers of truth and righteousness, and



that they have studied, and put in order most carefully, the doctrines found in the Bible, as dealing with the redemption of mankind. It may even be granted that their systems of thought are, in the main, true conceptions ; and, as such, worthy of the highest honour. The point here is not the perfection, or the imperfection, of theology ; it is this fundamental question, Is it empiricism, philosophy, or is it science ? Theologians may claim that theology is true science ; that philosophy also is true science ; and that the physical sciences are not, but only falsely so called. Physical scientific thinkers, who know something about theology, would smile at what they would consider the conceit and ignorance of theologians, and it is quite possible that they would not think it worth their while even to argue with men who did not, and would not, try to comprehend the difference in the two orders of thought. The matter of fact is that the two classes of men use the word in different senses and with different meanings, and thus it is little wonder that they do not understand each other. The scientific thinkers would class all ancient knowledge, including theology and philosophy, as empiric ; and he would date the birth of true science to Copernicus, Newton, and others in astronomy ; to the great discoverers in chemistry and physics ; and to more modern workers in the realms of biology, psychology, and kindred subjects. It is well known that the methods of study differ ; that of science being termed inductive ; and that of theology deductive ; but whether mere analysis and synthesis create the difference may be an open question requiring careful consideration. The chief point to grasp is that scientific workers analyse and synthesise their thoughts, until they discover the order that exists ; and all other scientific workers, following the same order, obtain similar results. When the order is known then there is an end of all strife and differences of opinion ; the order discovered, known and defined, is law, and there the matter rests. Scientific men say that there is no such unity and harmony in theology ; therefore the theologians have not discovered the order ; they are empiric thinkers ; they do not agree among themselves ; and, so long as they study as they are doing, they will never agree as to the order, and be able to say with one voice, this is law.

As an example of these differences in theology, it may be useful to point out that there are different schools of thought ; or theologies, that may seem to contradict each other ; and of necessity theologians who cannot agree with their brethren, class

each other orthodox, or heterodox, and thus those that are to be blessed, or those that are to be banned. It must not be forgotten that all students of the Bible find their fundamental principles, of their theology, in, or derived from, that Book ; it is, therefore, very wonderful that such diverse beliefs exist, in so many forms ; and yet it is only fair to assume that all thinkers really seek to know what is true, that they may do what is right. Is it not necessary to assume that no matter what differences are thus found in theology, or in the want of it, that, as a rule, the thinkers are honest men, expressing what they believe to be true ? If this is not granted, it must follow that those who differ in their opinions will call each other fools, liars, deceivers, and all kinds of bad names ; and instead of religious peace, and a family of God, there must come strife and hatred, ill-will and all uncharitableness. It is not necessary to consider many forms of theological or church divisions that exist to illustrate what is meant ; if four are taken, as examples, these may be sufficient to indicate in what way theologies may be imperfect, and churches unreliable and uncharitable. For example, if men study the great historical churches of East and West, will they not find that such churches rest upon tradition, authority, ritual and ceremony ; and their creeds of the faith will be found to be of the most complex, far-reaching type ; they stereotype the history of religious thought ; and they really form great earthly institutions, which they assert are divine, the very work and kingdom of God upon the earth. The second type is very different ; it is humane, and it seeks the welfare of mankind ; it cares little for theologic dogmas, rejects impatiently almost every creed, and it would be satisfied with giving glory to God if only men would live at peace with each other, be humane, the children of the one heavenly Father, and thus prove their humanity by their love of truth, their works of righteousness, and their mutual friendship and kindness toward each other. The third type may be that of the Reformation period ; here there will be found a rupture from the historic churches ; a suspicion of want of confidence in, and even antagonism to, humanitarianism, or what seems to exalt man, and lower the glory of Christ ; with an excessive stress laid upon creed, order, faith, and orthodoxy, and with republican, or democratic, forms of church government. The fourth type, let it be that of the mystic, the Quaker, the perfectionist, the idealist, in many forms, in many churches, and outside all churches ; this type cares little for tradition, can see

little glory in man, cannot bear the fetters of creeds or forms of government, and can find a home only in the spiritual, the ideal, the heavenly, the Divine Love, the mystical; and to such this is religion, and all the others are to be condemned for their worldliness, selfishness, cantankerousness; they are dominated by earthly passions, and might well be condemned as irreligious.

It may be assumed that few students of Church history will question the fact that these forms of churches and classes, or types of people, have existed, and still exist, among men, and that the judgment is not too severe when it is asserted that they have lived in the state of perpetual strife, and that they have hated each other with the most unworthy hatred. This is not the place to consider why these things have taken place, or whether men have been faithful or unfaithful to their Lord and Master; the question is this—Do they exist now, and is there any justification for such a condition of the Christian family? Is there anything wrong in what might be named the lawful, historical continuity of the Church as an organisation; or even of carrying that history back into the Jewish Church, as found in the Jewish kingdom, and to the nation in the Desert? Assuredly not; the Bible exists for this very purpose, to prove the continuity and the development that has taken place in the Church of Christ. The error is not in history, but in men so interpreting and conserving that history, as not to fairly recognise the development that has taken place, and by perversion of the vision to change the Church of Christ, redeemed by his death, into a pre-Christian organisation; and it might even be an imitation of heathen forms of worship and religion. Is there anything wrong in the humanitarian attitude of those who care little for history, tradition, and authority in the Church, but who care greatly that it should live humanely, wisely, kindly and charitably, instead of in pride, power, luxury, and consumed with ambitious projects after greatness and glory? Assuredly not, these men think rightly; what they hear is the cry of the hungry and the thirsty, they see the open sores of the sick, the condition of down-trodden slaves, the miserable prisoners, and the wailing of souls in trouble; these things touch their hearts, and thus to them religion is not a glorified Church, or a Kingdom of heaven on the earth, but a renewed earth where men might live in peace and content with the blessings they possess. Is there anything wrong in men trying to put in order their thoughts as to the great works of God, in creation, providence and redemp-

tion ; and putting these in form, as confessions of what they believe to be true, upon these all-important subjects ? Surely not ; take away from men such freedom of thought and they would certainly gravitate earthward, and become like the beasts that perish ; the error is not in freedom of thought, or in the work of the intellect, but in attempting to take away from other men this same freedom, by constraining them to accept the conceptions of one age as suitable for after ages, upon the penalty of being named heterodox, and heretical. It was good to think and record the thoughts of the Reformation period as a stage of development, and this might well become a barrier against the inroads of evil ; but it was not wise or well done, to make every church a centre of strife, every city a place of defence, and the various churches and modes of thought hereditary enemies. It is not necessary to excuse, accuse, or praise, the mystic type of thought ; it may not have been always richly endowed with practical wisdom, but there is strong testimony in its favour when it can be said that the heavenly dreamers have been found in all the churches, and that the sweet songs of sainted singers and poets are used in all churches, by all classes of people, as their richest treasures upon the earth. It is in the company of the mystical thinkers, and the sweet singers and poets, that there has been Christian unity, for it is here that Catholics, Humanitarians, Unitarians, Calvinists, Armenianists, and all kinds of Christian sects join in unison, and sing together the same hymns of praise that dissolve and destroy all their intellectual differences.

Can it be possible that the very gifts of the Spirit to men have been the cause of strife, and that what is so culpable in the Christian Church is a distinct proof that evil has reigned in the churches, and that men have willed that it should be so, thus placing themselves in false positions, and unintentionally supporting the evil powers instead of the Lord and Master ? If the matter is put in this form, it may be seen that the Spirit has been working in all the churches in the order of development, and that all have come short of understanding and obeying the behests of the Spirit. It is a great spiritual truth that the order of the Spirit is the fourfold one of Faith, Hope, Patience and Love, and many illustrations of this truth have been given. Here it is only necessary to refer to the four Gospels as indicating what has taken place in Christendom, and in what way the churches have erred. The Gospel of Matthew is historical, and the historical churches embody in a

true form their inheritance of Faith in that Gospel. The Gospel of Mark is humane, and in humanitarian form it speaks of Hope ; in it Christ is the Son of Man, the Saviour, the Benefactor of mankind. By this Gospel do not Unitarians and Humanitarians prove their claim to a portion of the children's bread, and to the blessings of the Gospel and Church of Christ ? The Gospel of Luke is specially the inheritance of those in the West, and in the far West ; it is for the great empire of the world ; it is the Gospel that requires much Patience for its operations, for its study, and for the conception of its spiritual order. With this Gospel in his hands, any man on the face of the earth can claim the Divine birthright and blessing ; and the Spirit of all Truth and Grace will honour and ratify the claim. With the fourth Gospel there is thorough exclusiveness, and perfect inclusiveness ; those excluded shut themselves out because they will not accept the light of truth ; they will not live the Divine life ; they will not receive the Divine Love ; and all are included who accept these Divine mysteries, believe them to be true, live the life they direct, and love God and men in the spirit of Christ. The Gospel of Faith comes first ; it is the great inheritance of all the churches, and all the churches have an equal right to the first Gospel. What then ? Even the story of the Desert ; the goodly land was there ; it had been spied out for a period by men chosen for the purpose, the apostolic witnesses ; but the people fell, they would not enter in because of their unbelief ; in their hearts they cried for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and the conceits and wisdom of the East. That is the truth as recorded in history ; let men accept or reject this truth as they please ; whether they know it or not, they have been wandering in the great spiritual Desert, and they have followed in the footsteps of Israel. But has God failed in His work, in His great purpose, of the redemption of mankind. Not so ; the other Gospels have had their historic settings, as in that great struggle that divided West and East as Churches, in Arianism upon the question of the Divinity of Christ, and as followed by the great upheaval in the days of the Reformation. The great work of redemption has gone on from age to age under all these varied forms of human life and development, and men have had no true conception of this great work of God, and of the laws by which it was being carried on around them. They are being awakened to these facts by the voice of science ; and all that they can say is that these laws have been in operation for thousands of years ; they are

in force to-day, and in a short time they will radiate before an awakened world the glory of God in His power, wisdom, mercy, and love.

It can be seen that the methods of empiricism and science differ greatly in their ways of looking at, and studying, the works of God ; the former cannot transcend, the earthly, the apparent the ever changing ; and, the highest spiritual conceptions have to be conceived and expressed under the forms of the inorganic, what is ever changing ; but with science there is a difference, the veil of the changing forms is torn asunder from top to bottom, and it is seen that the order is organic, vital ; that law reigns, and law is the Will of God. Empiricism reads history and it sees plains, mountains, rivers, and seas, an onward order of progress ; science reads the record more carefully, and it finds that there is living process and development, analogy, harmony, synchronism and diversity in unity ; there is also an ideal in the work, purpose and design, and it seems to be the same living purpose that is ever being repeated in recurring forms all through the ages. Thus for example with Abraham, the key to his life is faith and obedience, but involved in his life there is the promised land, the Son, the hope of the world, the blessings promised to all nations and the summation of the life in peace under the realised blessing of love in the union of Isaac and Rebekah. The faith of Israel failed in the desert, but the children possessed the land under Joshua. Israel failed in the land ; there was rejection, idolatry, punishment, the captivity, the restoration and hope ; and in due time, the Christ, the hope of the ages appeared. The Spirit came, a new era dawned ; the ever blessed patient Spirit moved among the nations, and the promises to Abraham have been fulfilled in abundant blessings upon the West in particular ; but also with the breaking of a new day toward the East. Yet even as former ages closed so has this age of the Spirit ; out of the ruins of empiricism, men think that they see arising above the horizon, the City of God, in scientific order, radiant with light, renewed with a new life, and governed by the laws of Divine Love. The ideal is not that this land is possessed ; it is that men have seen and walked through it ; that they have tasted the first-fruits, and that they possess two and a half portions bordering upon the land of spiritual law. They have been upon Mount Pisgah, and with eagle-like vision they have seen what will be possessed ; and truly this is a very great vision indeed, well

worthy the consideration of faithful, thoughtful, truth loving men. Once more the familiar questions may be put to this vision. Whence has it come? It is not an earthly vision through earthly wise men; it is a true revelation from God through Christ by the Holy Spirit. When did it come? It is the history of time; but, apart from Christ, time is not, for He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End of the great work of Redemption and Restoration. Why has this vision come? Even for the spiritual regeneration, renewal, and redemption of men from the powers of evil; it has pleased the Spirit to conceive, plan, purpose, and design this work, execute it in manifold recurring forms, of which men had no conception; and He has also graciously revealed to men the method of His working, so that they may know, adore and praise God, the Allwise and All Merciful. What is it that has come to men by this revelation? The Kingdom of Grace by which there is pardon and peace; the Kingdom of Heaven by which men are raised from earthly empiric thoughts to the conceptions that are heavenly; in fact, the way is opening up for men to realise that ideal found in Christ, of being heavenly, and in the Kingdom of Heaven, even whilst surrounded by the earthly. There is also that Kingdom of God as found in creation, that is universal, for men may hope and patiently wait for this Kingdom yet to be made manifest. How has the vision come to men? By the Will of God, in His grace, pity and love; by the revelation of Christ as Redeemer; by the Holy Spirit; by the Word of God in all its Divine Wisdom, and by its marvellous, complex development in experience, empiricism, and law, as the Will of God. Who is the revelation in this vision? It is God as immanent in Christ, for Christ is the Revelation of God in Grace. Whereunto does this vision tend? To a great spiritual revolution in thought; and to a reconstitution of all the thoughts of men. Whither will the vision lead men? To the Father's home of many mansions; to the glorified Christ; to the Spirit and spiritual fellowship; to true knowledge; to righteousness; to the overthrow of evil; to the light radiant and glorious; to the life eternal; and to where Christ shall for ever reign in His Kingdom of peace and love.

A thought may be expressed here with the eyes fixed upon the present and the future, and with a due sense of responsibility in uttering, what men may realise to be of great importance. What is the true position in which men find themselves now; and,

in what spirit are they preparing to advance into the future ? In all soberness the confession must be made that in society, in the State, and in the Church, the condition is that of intellectual confusion, moral antagonisms, intense Christian antipathies, and thus, in fact, spiritual chaos. There are hopeful aspects, but there are also signs that tend to warn men that the Judge is at the very door ; and that unless there is true repentance, and a sincere turning to God for mercy and grace ; then just as surely as the doom of judgment fell upon the nations of the East, on Israel, on Greece and Rome, so the judgments of God will fall on Christendom. This is not a pessimistic cry to engender fear ; rather it is as the voice of law, that goes in mercy before the storm, asking the question, How can men have any hope of escape if they despise, neglect, or refuse to listen to, the Voice from heaven, revealing such a salvation ? The position in some parts of Christendom is peculiar ; it is not chaos merely, it is a condition analogous with what physical scientists are familiar, when they have a solution in that state which may almost be said to be quivering with magnetic or electric power, ready with the slightest touch to crystallise into solid forms of Divine order and beauty. The solution in the world of spiritual thought is in a similar state ; if men would only pause for a moment and utter their cries heavenward ; it almost seems as if the response would be the movement of the Spirit, a great change, and the revelation of the Divine order in perfect science, even of law, as the Will of God. This conception of such a spiritual condition of society may be supported, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, for the following reasons : Men see, or they ought to do so, that there are not, in the nature of things, irreconcilable difficulties in the way of men, to prevent unity and harmony in their thoughts and actions. Childlike experience grows into the manhood of empiricism, and they can walk together peacefully ; empiricism has its own empire of thought, and therein the practical man has reigned ; but science has disputed the universal empire of empiricism ; there has been a long struggle for the dominion ; and, it appears that science has attained to the supremacy. These do not disagree ; experience is psychic ; empiricism is intellectual ; and science is spiritual, heavenly. The first breathes the spirit of faith, the second sustains hope ; the third speaks of patient labour ; and the fourth is the mystic, the Divine, where God dwells and love



reigns. If thinking men see these things, then they must conclude that jealousies in society ; intellectual strife in the world of literature ; party strife and ambition in the State ; and divisions, of parties and ill-will in the Church of Christ are altogether out of place ; they simply prove that sin is regnant, that the devil is the master deceiver, and that men of all classes, who create strife and ill-will, are his servants. Men must decide whether they are to listen to the voices that utter truth ; follow the men that work for righteousness ; and cherish the Divine Spirit that makes for peace ; or, choose to follow base idolaters, who turn their backs on God and righteousness, and worship wealth, power, lust, gambling, debauchery, covetousness, those false gods of the heathen that can never bring the blessings of happiness and peace to men.

These thoughts refer specially to the present time, to society, the State and the Church ; but it is needful to utter a word of warning as to individuals in their relations to the commonweal. The figure of the chemical solution ready to crystallise is a parable applicable to society in the mass ; but it is well to remember that the mass is made up of molecules and atoms, and that these are so chemically conditioned that they are repellent, or so related, that they are attracted to each other. There may be a condition where no motion is traceable, a repellent motion causing separation, or a magnetic polarised action of great power that changes the solution into a solid crystallised mass. The parable is not difficult to understand, each man is an atom in the body politic ; if the solution of society, even as an apparent chaos, becomes Divinely magnetic and polarised, then that society is being prepared by the Divine work of the Spirit, and the issue will be an ordered cosmos as the result of law. On the other hand, let it be assumed that there are men in society that are dia-magnetic in spirit, full of intellectual conceits, ambitious and arrogant, covetous and greedy, lustful and cunning, what can the result be but that of continued chaos ? The Divine laws of truth, righteousness and grace, are in opposition to such men ; they are opposed to moral law ; they will not respond to the Divine will ; and thus they prevent that Divine magnetic polarity that would permit society to fall into the Divine order. This is the parable of the chemical solution as applied to the commonweal and to a man ; the lesson that follows is to be found in the extension of the parable from the man to the com-

monweal. The man becomes magnetised and polarised in harmony with the Divine ideal in law ; and then each individual atom man falls into the same Divine alignment ; this movement penetrates and permeates the mass until it is quick, almost living, responsive, and when the electric moment comes the chaotic mass forms into a Divine creation, no longer a chaos with antagonisms but a cosmic heavenly creation. As can be seen this parable of the Kingdom is found at the very beginning of the works of God ; it is where the sea falls back and the earth appears ; but it is the same form of revelation in the Kingdom of Grace, in man and mankind, for it is the fundamental idea therein, that the regeneration, renewal and restoration of each man, is first in the atom man, and afterward in the mass of men. In other words, there is no regeneration of society, renewal of a state, or restoration of a Church, in the mass ; this is in each man as person, and each man has the Divine call to learn all that this means. Is not this where the repeated failures in history find their explanation ? Men would be regenerated by knowledge and wisdom ; saved and renewed by their states and governments ; and restored to the Divine favour by priests and Churches ; and the issue of it all is what Christ said long ago, and what is now seen to be true, that the Kingdom of God is first within the man, and it is the man, not the mass, the individual, not the state, that is of chief importance. It may be permissible to carry this parable and its analogy a stage further ; the facts may not be what can be demonstrated by actual experiment, but the illustration may be useful to teach a great spiritual truth. Chemists in their own order of thought state that the element carbon is of that class, where the atom is said to be repellent or attractive to other elements on four sides. This atom thing, far too small to be visible, possesses these affinities. Let the imagination conceive a solution of carbon at that point of magnetic polarity where an impulse from without would begin the crystallisation ; an invisible atom, four-sided, a crystal, enters or takes shape within, the solution, and around this there is built up the carbon crystal cosmos in all its glory. Now it is said that the diamond, the most lovely of gems, is the product of carbon, of this four-sided atom with its affinities ; thus that which is the perfection of purity and beauty may be derived from the invisible atom with its affinities, and that solution which is in chaos. What is this parable but an illustration of

man and of mankind ; the race was a chaos indeed still divine, into it there came the Divine Son, the Gem of Glory ; and, by the Spirit, it is around Him that the crystallisation that is heavenly takes place ; Himself the Foundation four-square, and every atom in the mass becomes a living gem, a pure crystal ; and all the redeemed in Him are as the perfect diamond of glory. How very wonderful are these parables of earth when the light from heaven flashes through them ; and who would imagine that the diamond, crystallised so long ago, would bring a message to men in these days as from the Spirit of God ? Yet so it must be for the atom carbon with its four sides speaks of the Spirit, His designs and works in the material world of darkness and of light, of chaos and of cosmos ; and men, spiritual atoms, trying to read the mystery of their own history, and attempting to catch a glimpse of the glory yet to be revealed, think of themselves, and of the City of God as four-square, as the Divine work of the Spirit, in Faith, Hope, Patience, and Love.

It may be suggested that the conceptions reached upon the subject of the intellectual order, and moral law, tend to harmonise with the science of ethics as explained by one agnostic ethical teacher ; and it is interesting to observe how thin the veil becomes betwixt scientific ethics and the method of Christ. The order of reasoning, based upon psychology, considered as “ social tissue,” out of which the moral nature of man is built up, may be generally adopted as a true exposition of these complex problems ; but it is when the moral nature of man is studied that there is an entrance into a realm of thought which may be said to transcend that of the usual Christian teaching. The true moral nature of man is not to be conceived as under law to *do*, or to obey, a written code of law ; but summed up in the conception that man should *be* right ; in fact that *being* is behind, above, and greater than *doing*. It is character that is all important in the struggles of life, and conduct expresses what the man is in his being, his moral nature. If the principles of the agnostic, ethical teacher can be briefly summed up in the following virtues : courage, benevolence, temperance, chastity, truthfulness, and justice, it will be seen that they are in their order in harmony with the method of Christ. The virtues of courage and benevolence express power and force of character linked with that life of kinship, and of kindness, without which there would not be any social organism. Those of temperance and chastity may be conceived as psychic ; it is the temperate

spirit that watches over, supplies and preserves, what the chaste mind, or soul, requires ; only chastity here is not the virtue as applied to conduct, it is the state of the pure and good soul, as it ought to be and live ; a perfect psychic organic creation within man. The virtues of truthfulness and justice are the usual intellectual and moral powers with which man is endowed ; and it is not necessary to prove that if man is true and just he will be like God ; or that if he attains to this state of *being* he will regain manhood. Thus far it is easy to follow the ethical evolutionist ; the ideals are in harmony with the method of Christ ; but when what is named altruism is conceived as moral, and the Grace of God in Christ is shut out as transcendental, then it is felt that the ethical teacher fails to realise the true relations and conditions of mankind.

It can be conceived intellectually that the moral *order* may be summed up in the virtues named ; and, as thus interpreted, the moral order of life is being courageous, and benevolent in act ; temperate and chaste in heart and soul ; and true and just in perfect manhood. If mankind were in this happy condition the result would be manhood, the ideal moral life. The fact is well known that men are not in this state ; therefore, utilitarians seek after, and try to find, as their ideal, pleasure and happiness ; and what they eschew and wish to cast out of society and the experiences of men are pain and misery. Thus conceived the utilitarian, as ethical teacher, suggests that the order of the moral life, as known scientifically, is a life that is lived in conformity with the virtues named ; but the moral state, as in conformity with moral law, is that of pleasure and happiness, and not of pain and misery. This is exactly the position reached by the method of Christ, because by it the facts are clearly seen that the intellectual *order* requires the life to be in harmony with the virtues named ; but moral law, as life, cannot be so defined ; it is not *doing*, it is being in harmony with Divine moral law. Ethical teachers conceive that beyond all virtuous *doing* it is all important that there should exist this state of *being* ; and that with this attained there would co-exist happiness and pleasure. But this can only be gained by the elimination out of the living and doing of what causes pain and misery. It is by the way of scientific *order* and *law* that such conceptions are reached ; only it is not clearly understood what is the intellectual order and what is moral state and law. The method of Christ seems to make this point clear when scientific

order and moral law are kept separate ; because then, the man, as moral, stands above the order, giving approval to the same ; but the moral life is being, not doing ; and being is law, not order. Thus order is relation, condition, doing, science ; but law is ultimate being—the fact or reality believed. The order of the moral life is doing what is virtuous ; the law of the moral life, in its being, is conceived as the state of happiness and pleasure. In other terms, analyse the moral life, as doing, and it is conformity to those virtues that are known to men ; synthesis the moral life into a unity, and it is love to God and man, in which there is pleasure and happiness, and no trace of pain and misery. This is where the harmony is found, and it may be expressed in very plain words ; if men obey, *do*, confirm to, the moral order they know, then they will *be* moral, Godlike, and happy ; but if they disobey, and do not conform to the order they know to be right they will find themselves under conditions that they know to be painful and miserable. This is not a new doctrine to be limited to the moral state ; it is the line of demarcation traceable through all the Works of God. On the left hand, in the realm of knowledge, science, there is Divine Order ; on the right hand, faith in God, and in law, as the Will of God. All this has been considered in the conception of science as order ; of God as Ultimate Being ; and of Law as related ultimate condition of being. These latter are outside the realm of the intellect ; thus before the question, What is God as Being ? Man must with all humility veil his face ; and if the question is asked, What is Law in this ultimate sense ? the reply may be, The Will of God ; or the Spirit of God. It is interesting to find the ethical evolutionist coming so near the conception as it is to be found in the method of Christ ; the veil of sense is nearly gone ; the thin gauze veil of the moral life has permitted the light from heaven to pass through ; the man has been found working in the light of Christ in science ; had he looked heavenward, as well as earthward, he would have seen the face of the Blessed One, and in Him there would have been found that pleasure and happiness his soul desired and sought after. It is because Christ is, in His Being, and in His Doing, the Ideal of the moralist as Man, that He is as Son of God, the perfect Saviour ; and thus the useful means by Whom sin, pain, and misery will be taken away, and the moral life of pure pleasure and happiness restored and attained. What men require to realise is that on the one side is intellectual order, as summed up in science ; and,

on the other Being and Laws of Being. By the intellect man is enfranchised into the free, spiritual Kingdom of God, and he is taught that physical and psychical things and thoughts are not what they seem ; they are the relations of a great spiritual order, the Being of which transcends intellectual relations. Man is so constituted that he can, on the one side, conceive this perfect Divine order ; and he can also truly believe and realize that the Being in Nature is the same as the being in himself ; that he is not subject to the order that exists, but is raised above order by the moral law that reigns in his constitution. Man is a creature truly subject to b th order and law ; but when, in all soberness, he asks himself, What is man ? or what ought man to be ? The answer is that man is, or ought to be, the image of God ; but when sinful, then as redeemed by Christ, and regenerate by the Spirit, the renewal is to the likeness of Christ ; and it is by the Spirit as Revealer and Sanctifier that this new creation is made manifest in the Divine order, and in harmony with Law as the Will of God.

In thus suggesting possible harmony of modern ethical teaching with the Method of Christ, it is important to remember that the moral realm is one that may be conceived as subject to the law of development. If the same line of thought is applied to Greek philosophy, and to the highest moral teaching of that nation, it may be found that Greek thought is well advanced, and that it is like modern ethics in being in harmony with the Method of Christ. The ancient and modern systems of thought do not seem to differ greatly, thus the question may fairly be raised whether any development on moral teaching has taken place. The virtues that express the order of the good life may be summed up as courage and kinship, or friendship and kindness, as the outward visible unity of the man, family, tribe, or nation. The psychic virtues may be conceived as temperance, or prudence, and goodness, or chaste purity in the man. As virtues for the citizen and statesman, truth and justice are necessary in the city and State. Above these, and rising out of them, the Greek sought after science, or true knowledge ; and along with this perfect knowledge there was the ideal of harmony and unity as expressed in philosophy or wisdom.

It will be observed that each set of two virtues is linked with what is physical, psychical, moral or philosophical ; and that the highest Greek ideal is wisdom, or philosophy. 1. Courage

and kinship are visible in the man, family, or nation. 2. Temperance and goodness are linked with the good state of the soul of man. 3. Truth and justice with the man as citizen and as true and righteous, trustworthy. 4. In science and philosophy there is the Greek aspiration after an ideal; in modern thought they sought after Divine order, and they would express that order as law in philosophy, the highest wisdom. This division is that of the nation and of mankind; of man; of the society, city and State; and the universal in which there is knowledge, order, harmony, and unity.

These thoughts may be expressed in the ideal of the Spirit thus: 1. Faith in the great family or brotherhood of mankind. 2. Hope in one man, that by the life of virtue goodness might be attained. 3. Patience by the thought that with truth and justice regnant, society, the city and State might become righteous. 4. Knowledge and philosophy, it will be seen, take the place of Grace and Love, or Sacrifice; thus it can be seen at a glance that the Greek ideal could not possibly succeed at that stage of development. What the knowing and wise men have sought after in all ages is true scientific knowledge and divine wisdom as law; and what they have rejected is, what men conceive as the Gospel of grace, mercy, and love, the one supreme need of every man and of mankind.

If men could conform to all the virtues, attain to the knowledge of all science as order, and to Divine wisdom as philosophy or law, then they would know and find the chief good. What is this chief good conceived to be? Happiness. In what is happiness supposed to consist? It is thought of as health and harmony of function of being; in other words, what man ought to be in harmony with his whole being; to be and do what is right, the Will of God, this is the chief and final good. It would be unreasonable to strive with the Greek philosopher, or the ethical teacher about such an ideal; the only reply required is that men should conform to the virtuous life in its order perfectly; and be all that Wisdom and Divine Law requires them to be, for if they do they will be perfect and happy and the life will be pleasant in its conscious enjoyment of Divine happiness. The young ruler that came to Jesus asking what good he could do that he might inherit this kingdom of happiness was in the same position as the Greek philosopher; he looked for happiness in goods, and he failed to understand that his real want was

Divine Grace and self-sacrifice, and that only by this Divine way of life can men find, enjoy, and have pleasure in the kingdom of happiness and heaven. It is here that the Master's teaching is unique and Divine ; He does not talk of happiness as the chief good, or of pleasure as the way to it, but tells men plainly that the way to heaven or happiness is by the Cross, and by following in His footsteps. To Christ the chief good now is Grace and self-sacrifice ; to wise men of the Greek school, the ideal is happiness and pleasure ; the real difference is that Christ actually knows happiness, heaven, and the way thither ; whilst philosophers have no conception what happiness, or heaven, practically mean ; and they will not consider the true and only way by which they may reach their ideal. Heaven and happiness are conceived as the ideal good : that which is above and beyond all goods ; in reality this matter is reduced to Being, and Laws of Being, and the issue is God-likeness in man, in his being, and in conformity to the Divine Laws of being. Goods are different ; they may be summed up in science or order, thus : 1. Things. 2. Life and the healthy functions of the body. 3. The spiritual goods that enter by the special senses into man. 4. The goods in the soul treasured up in the memory. 5. Intellectual goods as knowledge of relations and of order. 6. Moral endowments as the laws of the being. All these as goods may lose their true value thus : 1. By covetousness and greed. 2. By disease and pain. 3. By desire, lust, and passion. 4. By a corrupt degraded soul. 5. By ignorance and error. 6. By sin or disobedience to law. These are the terrible facts that speak of pain, unhappiness, and hell ; and unless men, who think they are wise, can suggest a better gospel than Altruism, they will do well to study Christ's Gospel of Grace, try to understand what it really means, and whether it is or is not the very means of Grace they require to bring them to that heaven of happiness of which they fondly dream.

Further, as this matter is one of importance, it may not be considered out of place to suggest that this subject is one of natural development, or of the first stage of redemption ; and not of spiritual development as revealed in Christ ; there is a line of demarcation betwixt these stages, and it is necessary to notice the distinction betwixt the natural and the spiritual. The same story in another form can be traced in the Old Testament, in The Proverbs, and in Ecclesiastics, or the Preacher ; because these two books, of knowledge and wisdom, give to men



the highest science and philosophy, the ripe fruit of the natural Kingdom of Israel. The Proverbs are the summation of knowledge, the science of that age, as the conceivable order of life, the virtuous life men ought to live. The preacher is the sad, wise philosopher, who has sought for happiness by the way of pleasure ; he has sought in vain, and to him experience, empiricism, and science are as vanity and vexation of the spirit. If these books are studied in the light of these thoughts they will be better understood ; it will be seen that the conclusion reached by the preacher is both wise and good ; it is not goods but God that men should seek for and love ; and to obey law is life and duty. The Allwise is God, He is Judge, knowing all secrets, and it is God alone that knows good and evil. The proverb maker, the wise preacher, the philosopher, and the ethical teacher, are all a long weary stage behind Christ. In a sense He has come last ; but His gifts as goods in science cannot be summed up in order ; and it is His method that conveys to men Divine Wisdom and perfect Grace and Love. He has revealed the Divine order in the universe, as Science and men may know that Law is the Will of God, His Being as Spirit in Divine Wisdom.

With reference to the mystical books of Nature, Man and the Bible, it is assumed that these, in a sense, so far as the education of man is concerned, exist as separate volumes. The clue to their harmony and unity is not to be found in Nature or in Man, but in the Word of God, the spiritual revelation of the way of redemption from evil. It is also assumed that as the result of this harmony and unity in these Divine Books, there arises a new Book, conceived to be the mystic creation of the Spirit ; it is Light and Truth ; Life and Law ; it is also order of Being and Being conceived as Law ; and thus in a sense not yet fully understood, the mystic vision of all the ages ; and God revealed as All in all.

I. THE BIBLE.—In this Book the symbols are (1) God, or the Almighty. (2) Christ, or Life. (3) The Holy Spirit. (4) The Spirit in all wisdom in Creation and in the new Creation. (5) The Spirit revealing order as in Mosaism. (6) The moral order in Joshua. (7) Grace in Samuel, or the Kingdom. (8) Sacrifice, suffering, and sin as in the Captivity. Christ is the Ideal, the Spiritual in all these ; and they are all fulfilled in Him as Man. (9) The Spirit, revealing Christ. (10) The Spirit in the new spiritual creation. (11) The order of new creation studied spiritually. (12) The new Creation as the climax of Revelation.

II. MAN.—In this Book (1) Power or Force is subject as in nerve force. (2) Life. (3) Spirit. (4) Mind or memory. (5) Intellect. (6) Moral nature. The Fall. (7) Grace. (8) Sacrifice or suffering. (9) The Spirit and new spiritual life. (10) The new creature in Christ. (11) The Order conceived in the creation and new creation. (12) The Restoration.

III. NATURE.—In this Book there is harmony with the Book of man; they co-exist, they correspond and conform to each other. (1) Force. (2) Life. (3) Spirit. (4) Mind or Soul. (5) Intellect. (6) Morals. The Fall. (7) The Christ-Man. (8) The Divine Sacrifice. (9) The Spirit revealing Christ. (10) The Spirit creating or manifesting the spiritual Church. (11) The Spiritual order sought after. (12) Spiritual order and Law realised.

IV. MAN RESTORED.—(1) Christ as the Power of God. (2) Christ as Life. (3) The Spirit of Christ in all wisdom. (4) The Creation by the Spirit. (5) The order in Creation as intellectual. (6) The moral Man—Christ. (7) The Christ, as Saviour and Son of God. (8) The Divine Sacrifice. (9) The Spirit in spiritual realm. (10) The Christ as manifested in the new creation. (11) The spiritual order of the new creation. (12) Man in Christ's likeness as moral. (13) The Son of God, or Christ all in all.

In following the above order of thought, it will be observed that the light of truth radiates from the Bible, and that only by receiving the teaching of the Bible as the Work of the Spirit of God can the spiritual restoration be accomplished. There is also the natural order of development, which, it may be conceived, men have preferred to follow all through the ages. The natural order is the study of Nature as objective, and of man as subjective; and by these books to find order, harmony, and unity as by empiricism and philosophy. The spiritual comes to men by means of the Bible, and when they have found the order, harmony, and unity of these Books, then the result will be the new Book of Truth, and the new spiritual man in the likeness of Christ; and this is the mystic spiritual Kingdom of God which men have been seeking for throughout the ages. It is that better country, the heavenly, sought after by the father of the faithful; and all the faithful have been of the same mind as Abraham, for they, too, have been searching for the Land of the Promises, and for "that city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."

In the study of the principles named, and their order as realms of thought, it is necessary to keep in mind that they are conceiv-

able as separate problems. With physical force and life this is not difficult, because the physical sciences are conceived by scientific men in this order. It is also, it would seem, necessary to think upon creation as the Work of the Spirit; what is conceived as mind, or soul in man; and what is conceivable, as pre-historic or historic records, as stored up in Nature in the rocks, or in books of any kind, not as chaos but as cosmos; because in the Spirit and in the works of the Spirit there is no chaos; the chaos is in man, who, in his ignorant and fallen state, is unable to read and understand the Books of the Spirit. It may be conceived that the important thoughts that have arisen at this point, of attributing chaos to the conceptions of men, and cosmos to the spiritual ideals and works of the Spirit, are not easily understood. This perfection of the ideal, in purpose, design, order, as spiritual in thought, and as spiritual in fact and law, in what is said to be created or made manifest is, in a sense, a new line of thought; it is getting away from the imperfect, ignorant conceptions of men, and striving to attain to the standard of the Spirit and the spiritual, as revealed spiritually to men reaching after spiritual tuition. When the conception is met face to face then it is seen, and felt, that there cannot be chaos "in the Spirit;" because the Spirit is Divine Wisdom in plan, purpose, design, order, and law, therefore it must follow that when men are in the Spirit and spiritual, then to them forms and changeable appearances will pass away, the chaos of experience and empiricism will vanish, and men will walk in the light that is spiritual, of perfect intellectual order and of moral law. This is the issue that can be discerned, and it is for men to try to understand what these thoughts mean. If men continue to do their own will; or obey others who assert authority over them, as conceived in the light of human social order, then they will remain in that state which is subjection to self and sin; but if they do, obey, conform to the Divine spiritual order, the scientific life, then the yoke of sin will be broken and true freedom in the Spirit will be found. This is the secret of Christ, as explained by Himself, for He came not to do what He pleased, or to follow His own wishes or will, or to design a new order of life, but to obey the Father's Will, in the Spirit, and in Love. In this matter, as in all others, Christ is the perfect Example, the Type, for all men. The order of the life must be subservient to the Will that directs the life: and will is spirit, as conformed to law, engraven in the soul

by the Spirit as the Will of God. Indeed, this has only to be stated in plain terms to be recognised as common sense truth ; because to reverse this order, the meaning would be that the creation in its order is to reign over the Creator and Lawgiver that willed creation and law ; and that effects should take precedence of the causes producing them ; or, that man is to become the servant of his own creations, or works, a position seen to be foolish and unreasonable. Here men require to consider the following thoughts : 1. God as First Cause, may be conceived as Will or the Spirit Eternal. 2. All thoughts, effects, words are spiritual, as ultimates ; they are ideals, not things. 3. As spiritual, these are as order, plan, purpose, design, spiritual wisdom, and not to be conceived as physical or psychical. 4. Creation, and man, as creatures of God, are effects truly, but they are as His creations, spiritual, embodying true order and righteous law. 5. The creation, and man in his being, are in their being conceivable as perfect science in their order ; and conformity to the Divine order is harmony with the Divine life. 6. But man is more than order ; he is like God, and above order in the power of law ; thus, in a true sense, he becomes a lawgiver and a creator in the works of God. This is man, the ideal, the type ; he is in the image of God in goodness, truth, and righteousness. The Fall means to man the loss of the Divine image ; which, as law and will, is made subject to the creature as order. He gets lost in the desert of appearances, of causes and effects, and thus the loss of the Divine unity and harmony in the life of man. In this way man lost his crown, and his right to reign ; law as God's Will was dethroned, thus the man was degraded to the serpent form and type ; free, in a sense, but cunning, sensuous and sensual. This state of man is subjection to the creature, to order, to things of the senses ; thus dia-magnetism and darkness. It is for man, sin, sorrow, pain and death. 7. The Son of God, the Archtype, intervenes to seek and save those who were lost, and how this was done is the theme of the Bible and of history. 8. What He suffered as the Divine sacrifice, is the story revealed in the gospels and epistles, in His Life, works of mercy, betrayal, crucifixion, death and resurrection. 9. The work of the Spirit is the revelation of the Ideal in Christ. 10. The result was the new spiritual creation by the Spirit in men, in the likeness of Christ. 11. Guided by the Spirit men have sought after the spiritual order ; but as

subject to the continuous antagonism of the powers of evil in man and in the world. 12. Man will be regenerate, renewed, and restored to the favour of God to the Divine order and law ; and Christ will be glorified in this glorious work of redemption ; thus the victory of good over evil, and of grace over sin. The Incarnation of Christ, in this light of truth, in the Spirit, is the revelation of the doing of the Will of God by Christ, in the fullest sense ; it is perfect conformity to the Divine order of the Divine Being ; but, above this ideal of order, there is the Life of Divine Law, which is that inner harmony of Being, which is One with God, as Lawgiver and as Father in Love. Thus Christ is the Ideal ; and the Ideal is inscribed, engraven, and living, in His Being. His Life is perfect harmony in all things, and at all points, with the Will of God ; thus disorder, want of harmony, strife, sin, trouble, trial, shame, the Cross, and death, are all outside His true Self ; they merely surge in upon His bodily form for a time, and a Divine purpose ; they bruise His heel, the physical form, but they do not hurt the Divine Man and Son of God. If these thoughts are carefully studied, it will be seen that in the very nature of things it was impossible that Christ could have remained in the grave of death ; for this is the conception that the Creator could be subject to the created order ; that effects could be greater than their causes ; that man is less than his thoughts and works ; and that the physical is greater than the spiritual. Against such conceptions science, philosophy, religion and common sense utter their intense protest ; it is the inversion of all that is true, right and reasonable and only ignorant, self-willed, foolish creatures not yet enlightened by science, struggling in the darkness, seeking to emerge out of the chaos, could entertain such thoughts. What men see is the great conflict of good and evil, of truth and error, and of grace and love against sin ; what the faithless see is that evil, error and sin seem to be successful ; what the faithful, and all true, brave, good, and loving men have seen, and been assured of, through all the past ages, is that goodness, truth, righteousness, justice, mercy and love, must, without fail, gain the victory and overthrow the powers of evil. This conviction of the triumph of truth and righteousness is impregnable ; men know that, in the very nature of things, the perverted and false, the powers of disorder and immorality, cannot maintain lordship ; they may seem to prosper for a time ; but truth and righteousness

prevail, and evil powers when regnant are sowing the seed that will in due time bring about their own destruction. They sow the wind of ambitious strife, and the end is the whirlwind of war and destruction, and such thoughts as these are engraven into the history of this world. Men have seen this revelation of sin, of evil, and the results that have followed, for history is this revelation; they have also seen the revelation of Divine Love in Christ, and of grace in conflict with evil; and it is now made clear, as scientific order, that grace takes away the sting of sin that causes disorder and disease, death, and the result will be the higher life of Love in God which was attainable only by the way of the Cross and of sacrifice. It is this unique life of Grace and Sacrifice in Christ that is the Divine life in the highest sense; it conforms to, and is in harmony with, all that is Divine and natural in the order of development, with this special end in view, the restoration of the sinful to the favour of God; the overthrow of evil; and the bringing of men back to that state of happiness they had forfeited. It is this perfect willingness of Christ to observe the order, and to obey the Will of the Father in love, that is so remarkable; that He is the Type of what men ought to be, and do, is unquestionable; and it is for this very reason that they try to apprehend the order involved in His words and actions, and try to understand His Being and His Will, kept as they were in harmony with, and subservient to, the law, or Will of God. That Christ fully perceived and had conceived the meaning of His Own life and its results can be seen by reading the Gospel of John, specially the Sixth Chapter; there the forms of manna, bread and flesh, are all transfigured into spiritual order; the things are mere signs; His words are the spiritual life and order; and all who thus see Christ will become consciously one with Him, and He will "raise them up at the last day." There is no doubt as to the success of His life and work; it will be carried out; the great work of redemption will be consummated, and what is equivalent to a resurrection from death, and entering into a new inheritance, a Divine life, will assuredly take place. To Christ these thoughts were the spiritual realities; the things seen and tangible were as shadows and signs; the Life saw through and beyond the order; and resurrection meant to Him that disorder, disease, and death would end, die, be eliminated, from humanity in that life which conforms to law as being, and obeys order as the Will of God.

In the light of the method of Christ and as a problem in development, it may be suggested that this study may prove to be as the doorway opening to a new realm of thought of great spiritual importance. The natural meant here is not that of Nature ; it is the natural within the realm of Grace, the first stage in the process of redemption, the regeneration and renewal to the state of moral manhood. Nature, and natural, in the original form is shut out ; and it is a great truth that mankind, as a race, is not under natural law, but under Grace. This is the fundamental truth of the position of mankind before God ; and in view of the teaching of evolution it requires to be emphasized as of great importance. It may now be assumed as the result of development, in the realm of Grace, that man, by the use of the intellect and a life in conformity to moral law, could be raised to a higher position, and this is expressed in the age's long struggle to reach scientific knowledge and wisdom, or philosophy. Add to the moral nature these two powers and the conception would be the development of the natural man, under grace, into the likeness of God, by the method of Christ. Apart from Christ man could not attain to Divine wisdom ; and the history of Israel, Greece, eastern religions and ethical teaching, proves this assumption.

In a true sense the Old Testament down to the captivity of Israel may be considered as the natural ; and from the Restoration to Patmos, or the prophets, Christ, and the Epistles as the revelation of the spiritual. In the natural there is the revelation of God—the Father ; in the spiritual Christ—the Son. The natural seed bed of Israel is Chaldea ; the psychic womb of Christ and the spiritual is Israel ; and it is Christ that is the firstborn. Christ is the spiritual, having become perfect Man ; it is in Grace that He reveals the Father ; in sacrifice and suffering the Son ; the Spirit of Truth reveals Christ as the Truth ; and by the Spirit Christ is involved or incarnated into mankind as Divine Wisdom. What follows in due order is spiritual, intellectual inquiries in the Epistles to be followed by renewal into the image of Christ, the spiritual ; thus Christ is in all these as Man and Son of God ; and this is the revelation of Christ in the Word. The womb for Christ is Israel ; but the Seed of Christianity is Christ. This distinction is important because it explains in what sense the spiritual Church is His body. The ideal is the Church spotless and pure ; but the earthly body has been stained with covetousness, pride and evil. He is the Seed. What men are looking for is the redemption

and resurrection of this body, which is Christ's ; the end of the conflict with sin and death ; in fact, something like what took place when Jesus—the Christ—rose from the dead.

What is this new development that will arise in due time for which men are being prepared ? In the symbol language of John the Apostle, it is that mysterious change of being "in the Spirit" ; and being carried away to a great and high mountain from whence there will be seen the descent of the city of God from heaven, radiant with the light of the glory of God. The truth revealed is that immanent in history there has been revealed the dispensation of the Father as fulfilled in Christ ; and the dispensation of Christ, the Son, the Ideal, has been made manifest, and men have seen His glory, full of Grace and Truth. If then the visible Word has been fulfilled, are the dispensations of grace and the development of grace ended ? No ; the Vision is that the order is about to change ; there is to be a great revolution, and it is summed up in this thought, that men are to be "in the Spirit." In past dispensations men have had the Spirit in them for their regeneration, but they have been egoistic and self-centred, not realising the Spirit's presence and power ; the future carries in its heart this thought, that men are to be "in the Spirit," thus they will possess the scientific vision of knowledge ; and see the universe in the light of Divine Wisdom.

This is the glory of the Method of Christ, it reveals the order in the natural and in the spiritual ; it leads men through the mazes of human knowledge where they had gone astray from God and brings them back again to the Father's Home. Jew and Greek, ethical and moral teachers, all who love truth and righteousness, may now be able to understand why they have failed in their quest after Divine Wisdom. It could only be found by the way of mercy and of the Cross ; and it is the radiant light from Christ that gives men light and life as science and philosophy. But what may men expect to see "in the Spirit," in that new era of the Spirit ? They will see truth as spiritually radiant in Christ, by His Word and Method of teaching, not darkly as in a mirror, symbol or parable ; and, away beyond these things, as indicated by the Method of Christ, there are new revelations and visions of God which at the present time men are unable to see or conceive. This is the Vision of the Mystic : it is to be "in the Spirit" as the Light of Truth, and to be living in God, the Life Eternal.









